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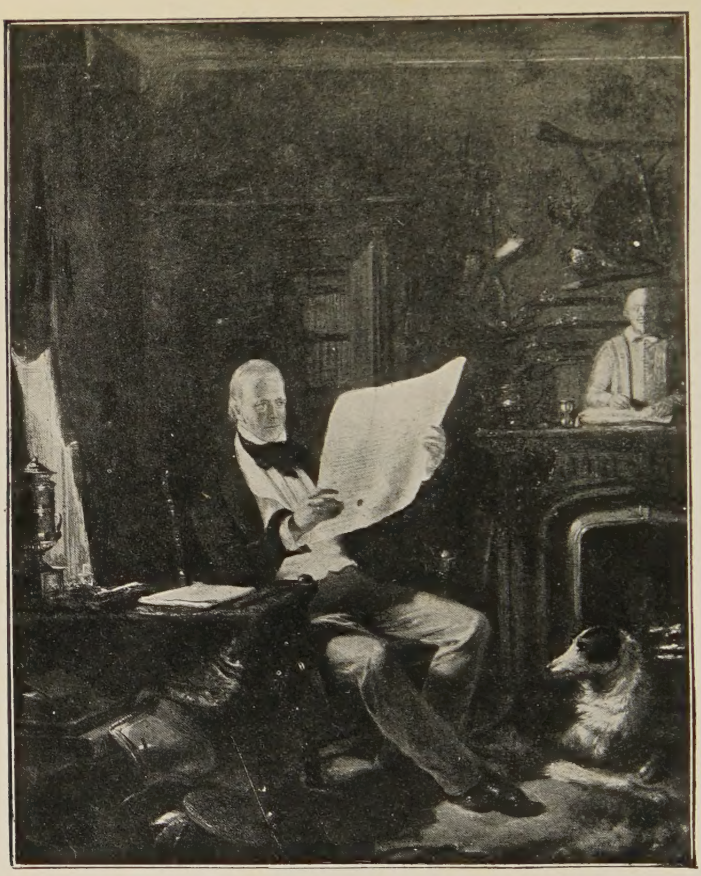

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART., IN HIS STUDY

From the portrait by Sir William Allan, R.A., in the National Portrait Gallery. Painted in 1832.

THE SCOTT COUNTRY

BY

W. S. CROCKETT, D.D., (EDIN.)

MINISTER OF TWEEDSMUIR
AUTHOR OF "ABBOTSFORD," "THE SCOTT ORIGINALS,"
"FOOTSTEPS OF SCOTT," ETC.

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TO
MY WIFE

one side, and of Abbotsford on the other; and with my home for many years now at the source of the "fair river," it were impossible to be unresponsive to the spirit of the scene. Sir Walter is still the guardian Genius of Tweedside, wielding an influence I think as potent to-day as when he wandered by its banks and braes. He is still (as has just been attested by the plebiscite of a popular journal) the most widely-read novelist either in Britain or America. Nor is his place as "King of the Romantics" likely to be held by any other. Interest in the Country of Scott never grows less. Abbotsford has always its quota of pilgrims, and no literary shrine is more venerated.

Gratifying testimony has reached me of help derived from "The Scott Country," and of the pleasure its perusal has given to Scott-lovers all over the world. In this new edition I have effected a considerable revision and the whole work is brought up to date.

W. S. Crockett

Manse of Tweedsmuir,
January 1930

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THE SCOTT COUNTRY

CHAPTER I

SCOTT'S EARLY YEARS—SMAILHOLM AND SANDYKNOWE

IN the summer of 1773, about the beginning of his third year, Walter Scott was sent to Sandyknowe, his grandfather's farm at Smailholm, in Roxburghshire. A teething fever had left him lame in the right ankle, and the fear of losing him, like the six others of their family who had died in early childhood, caused his parents to act on the best medical advice, and essay the healing effect of the fresh air and the plain but wholesome diet of the country.

Few places were more conducive to a strong and healthy physical life. The village of Smailholm has altered little since Scott's day save in the gradual dilapidation which has overtaken it. Clumped together here and there in what are practically three separate hamlets—the East Third, the West Third, and the Overtown—at a distance of about half a mile, its appearance is by no means prepossessing. The situation is, indeed, all that could be desired, but for years past the population has been steadily declining. What was once a busy agricultural centre, with all the signs of a joyous rustic life, is now deserted-looking and forlorn enough. The changed conditions of labour in the country districts, and a consequent migration to centres of industry, have told heavily on the Scottish hamlets; so Smailholm has not escaped. More than one-half of its neat cottage rows have become tenantless, rent, and open to all the storms. A kind of eerie quietude hangs about them; and there is sadness in the reflection that they are but samples of what is more than a merely local misfortune. Yet Smailholm as a place of residence has much to recommend it. Its situation, as has been said, is one of the best on the Borders. Lying on the ridge of hill-land between the valleys of the Eden and the Leader on the one side,

and the Tweed on the other, it commands some of the finest landscapes in Southern Scotland. Southward, the eye takes in Kelso, "bosomed in woods where mighty rivers run," and the long, level sweep of country bounded by Flodden spur and the blue range of Cheviot; while to the north the dun slopes of Lammermoor and the Lauderdale heights hem in an equally magnificent stretch. Close to the kirk-gate of Smailholm a choice picture presents itself in an almost unrivalled display of agricultural glory. From poetic Ercildoune and the broomy Cowdenknowes on the left, and the thick woods of romantic Mellerstain immediately in front, through the rich, variegated strath of the Merse, field upon field are spread out in the highest character of cultivation. As an autumn scene—in the golden glow of harvest—it is superlatively precious, and for the charm of Nature in her most beneficent moods nothing could be more striking. Smailholm offers many fine opportunities to artist and Nature-lover.

Here, then, in this neighbourhood, with nothing to contaminate its pure airs or its crystal waters, the child from the dingy, stuffy College Wynd of Edinburgh began to take in a store of strength. No one doubts that the going of Scott to Smailholm was the means of rescuing his little life, which had been trembling in the balance. Had he remained in Edinburgh, he would almost certainly have succumbed. It was the happy thought of Smailholm that saved him to his family and the world. But it did more. It gave the keynote to his future. It made a man of him in the truest sense of the phrase. What the boy felt in that first consciousness at Smailholm never left him all through life. It was there that Destiny began to work itself out. From the rustic humilities and simplicities of Sandyknowe he climbed to the highest pinnacle of reverence and renown. It was this first early environment which gave inspiration to all his after-career, and drew out of him the possibilities of his transcendent genius.

The conditions of life on a Lowland farm towards the end of the eighteenth century were different in many respects from farm life in the twentieth century. The dwelling-houses were primitive to a degree. Work was hard, incessant, and unrelieved by anything approaching to modern recreations. Wages were low, the food coarse, and by no means unlimited in quantity. But

the relationship between master and servant, was if anything, of a friendlier type. There was a sort of family arrangement acceptable to all parties. A greater sense of freedom prevailed, and consequently a closer communion both at work and leisure. Sandyknowe was no exception to the good, homely rule. Robert Scott was an old man and " wearing done " when his grandchild came to the ancestral roof. A typical specimen of the bygone Border farmer, he had been tolerably successful, and was " looked up to " by most people in the district. For was he not " sprung of Scotland's gentler blood," tracing descent from the renowned Wat of Harden, from no less than the bold Buccleuch himself ? His eldest son was a Writer to the Signet, happily married, and the rest of the family were fairly well-to-do ; yet humility was a sterling grace with the old man, for the pride of life had never found a place in his heart. Few men were more lovable or more loved. It was well known how his servants remained for long periods in his employment, and when the little Walter from the great city, which few of them had seen, came to cheer his declining days, it was an additional attraction to their simple household joys.

It is long since the " thatched mansion " at Sandyknowe, consisting of one story and an attic, gave place to a more commodious dwelling, but memory loves to linger around the scene of those early years of the most illustrious Scotsman the world has known ; and for his sake should not the modern homestead be regarded as scarcely less sacred ? It was just about here that he played—we can make a mental photograph of the scene. That winsome prattle brought sunshine into more than one life. Here it was that he showed the first signs of awakening to a sense of his own individuality, and of interest in the scenes around him. It was here that he felt the first breathings of that great spirit of romance and poetry which, as it thrilled through him, was to touch all coming time. It is not difficult to imagine those years at Sandyknowe. Childhood is ever the same. He had the most sacrificing of aunts in the person of his father's sister, Janet Scott, who, with all a mother's love, devoted herself from the very first to her " puir lame laddie." She watched and cherished him, guarded him from accidents, coddled him with little dainties, told stories to amuse his waking hours, and sang him to sleep at

nights. From the few odd volumes in a corner of the window-seat—all their library—she read to him about the heroes and great men of the world, characters from the Bible, and incidents in Scottish story. But nothing pleased him more than to listen to the tales told him by his grandmother of bygone days on the brave Border, and old memories enshrined so enduringly in the hearts of the people. Such names as Jamie Telfer o' the Fair Dodhead, Auld Wat of Harden, Wight Willie of Oakwood, Johnie Armstrong of Gilnockie, Jock o' the Syde, the Deil of Littledean, Michael Scot the "Wondrous Wizard," and Thomas the Rhymer of Ercildoune, were known to everybody, and the legends and ballads immortalizing them had been the treasured heritage of many a generation. From a volume of Ramsay's "Tea-Table Miscellany," which had found its way to Sandyknowe, he learned his first real lesson in the school of romantic verse. This copy was afterwards transferred to Abbotsford, and a marginal note tells that "This book belonged to my grandfather, Robert Scott, and out of it I was taught 'Hardyknute' by heart long before I could read the ballad myself. It was the first poem I ever learned—the last I shall ever forget."

But the boy's early home lay in the very heart of a romance-haunted region. No spot could have been better suited for a poet's education or for the making of a romancist. He lived and moved and had his being in an atmosphere of romance. Not more than a bowshot from the farmhouse there rose on its beetling crag one of those strongly-posted Border fortalices that dot all the district, erected by Act of the Scottish Parliament in 1535 "for the bigging of strengthis on the Bordouris." That, to be sure, is not the date of the original structure at Sandyknowe, which was certainly very much older. Robert Hop Pringell, as the name was written, is understood to have added to it, and strengthened it, about 1408 *; and, in accordance with the Act of 1535, it passed from its primitive character as a Border keep to the more defensive position of a tower. A smaller peel or bastle-house stood to the east of the village of Smailholm, but all trace of this has gone. Smailholm is a place of considerable antiquity. The name occurs in documents as far back as the eleventh

* Another account makes him the actual builder in 1400, but this is improbable.

SANDYKNOWE OR SMAILHOLM TOWER
(*From a Painting by William Smith*)

A. R. Edwards & Son

SMAILHOLM

century. Many notable families held the barony—the Olifards, Murrays, Douglases, Rutherfords, Purveses, Cranstouns, Humes, and Hop Pringells. The Earl of Haddington is now Lord of the Manor, and the Tower of Sandyknowe—as it is commonly designated—was long the property of Lord Polwarth, whose ancestor, Scott of Harden and Mertoun, purchased it about 1772 from the Pringles. It is now owned by the Earl of Ellesmere.

Sandyknowe is a typical specimen of the Border peel. It is considered to be the most perfect relic of a feudal structure in the South of Scotland, and at the height of its power must have been well-nigh impregnable. It stands lofty, square, and massive, on a rocky knoll, so commanding, and visible " at such a distance, as to be a guiding-mark to mariners off Berwick." On three sides it is defended by steep, almost perpendicular crags, and on the fourth by a morass and a deep little loch—perhaps the lochan of " The Abbot "—the remains of a larger loch that once environed the height. These, with a strong outer wall, still traceable, within which the cattle were driven upon sudden alarm, protected the tower or chief structure. This is built of broken whinstone, with the door-sides and lintels of a bright blood-red sandstone native to the district, brought probably from the Black Hill of Earlston. The walls are between seven and nine feet thick, and bear no traces of ornamentation. Entering by the iron door on the west, there is first a lower dimly-lit vault, arched, with a small opening in the roof. Above this is the hall or large room of the tower, having an ample fireplace. This had a wooden roof, which is now gone, and above it had been a chamber, also with a wooden covering, which has disappeared, and above this is the highest story, under a vaulted roof of rough stones of great strength. West and east on the top are bartisans whence there is an outlook of vast expanse. From base to balcony it is sixty feet, and is reached by a well-preserved spiral stair. The whole building is suggestive of immense strength. The assaults of armed hosts and Time's corroding touches have left little difference on the main body of this most interesting pile. Was ever scene so grand and fair ? That must be the reflection of all who have gazed from the summit of Sandyknowe on the panorama spreading far and wide around it. Scott knew it well, and brought many of his friends in later years to get into raptures

over it. His last visit was with Turner in the autumn of 1831, when the great artist made a sketch of the place for a new edition of the Poems. As an amphitheatre of the most perfect beauty, crowded with a thousand memories of the heroic and the romantic, the view from Sandyknowe should satisfy all lovers of the land of Scott. A short distance to the west, the Brethren Stanes enshrine their tearful tragedy, whilst legends of the youthful Cuthbert, greatest of Border saints, still linger by the haunts of his boyhood. Further over is Bemersyde of the perennial Haigs, eternally fortified by the Rhymer's couplet. And away yonder are Dryburgh, its white monks long since laid to rest, its bells long done ringing; the Wizard-cleft Eildons; Melrose, "like some tall rock with lichens grey"; the storied vale of the Gala; the Ettrick and Yarrow landmarks; and in the distance the grassy peaks of Peeblesshire. On the south are the Dunion and Ruberslaw, Penielheugh and Lilliard's Edge, Carter Fell, and the long wavy outline of the Cheviots. To the north the Black Hill of Cowdenknowes sentinels the Rhymer's Ercildoune and the sweet pastoral haughs of the Leader. On the east rise the crags of Hume with its dismantled castle, "stern guardian of the Merse," the Dirrington, Covenant-haunted Duns Law, and the open-spreading, cultivated, fertile valley of the Tweed.

"Such," says Lockhart, "were the objects that had painted the earliest images on the eye of the last and greatest of the Border Minstrels."

> "More mighty spots may rise, more glaring shine,
> But none unite in one attaching maze,
> The brilliant, fair, and soft, the glories of old days."

It can hardly be forgotten how the Tower of Sandyknowe itself influenced Scott's early compositions. Indeed, through one of these he may be said to have practically saved the building from possible destruction. In 1779 the place had fallen on evil times, and Scott of Mertoun being informed of the fact, and entreated by his kinsman to arrest the hand of the spoiler, "requested playfully a ballad in which Sandyknowe should be the scene, as the price of his assent." From this circumstance we are indebted for what is one of the greatest, though it was one of the earliest, of his ballad productions, the "Eve of St. John":

"That lady sat in mournful mood;
Look'd over hill and vale;
Over Tweed's fair flood, and Mertoun's wood,
And all down Teviotdale."

Here, then, Walter Scott spent his boyhood, and was initiated into the mysteries of Nature and the wider world of the Unseen. Here there burst upon his vision the first glimmerings of that larger life in which he was to play so prominent a part. The pictures of Scott at Sandyknowe are genuinely pleasing. This is a sweet little glimpse of an earlier scene: "Old Mrs. Scott sitting with her spinning-wheel, at one side of the fire, in a *clean, clean* parlour; the grandfather, a good deal failed, in his elbow chair opposite; and the little boy lying on the carpet, at the old man's feet, listening to the Bible, or whatever good book Miss Jenny was reading to them." At other times we can see him rolling on the floor to his heart's content, or with the eager, childish glee of one who had thoroughly entered into the spirit of the thing, trying his level best to catch hold of the watch which Sir George Makdougall of Makerstoun, an old neighbour and frequent guest, used to drag along the carpet to induce him to follow it. And when the long summer days came, with their warmth and brightness, and it was a delight to be out-of-doors, his nurse would carry him to the hillside and the shady beild of the crags, swathed sometimes in strange enough garb, a "Tartar-like habiliment"—the skin fresh as it was flayed from the carcase of a sheep, an old, if odd remedy for lameness. Then, later on, when the more delicate stage had passed, and the lines of health were beginning to glow on his cheek, when he could walk and romp about, he was usually to be found in the company of auld Sandy Ormiston, the shepherd, or "cow-bailie," drinking in with keen boyish zest all the lore of the country-side, in which that worthy was so well qualified to be his instructor. He was living in the land of the ballads and amid the scenes of many a bloody fray. Many stories floated about the district of the Highlander years, and there were a few who could remember the Rising of the '15. There were old traditions, too, that the realm of Faëry was not far distant, and he could tell of Cuthbert also and his miracles of mercy at Wrangholm, the next farm-town from Sandyknowe. Of all these, we may be sure, the boy Walter heard with ever-increasing enthusiasm.

The well-known passage in the Introduction to the Third Canto of "Marmion"—certainly one of the finest of Scott's word-pictures—recalling so tenderly the memory of those early days may be quoted at length. It is at once a record and an *apologia*.

"Thus while I ape the measure wild
Of tales that charm'd me yet a child,
Rude though they be, still with the chime
Return the thoughts of early time;
And feelings, roused in life's first day,
Glow in the line, and prompt the lay.
Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,
Which charm'd my fancy's wakening hour.

* * * * *

It was a barren scene, and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled;
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green;
And well the lonely infant knew
Recesses where the wall-flower grew,
And honey-suckle loved to crawl
Up the low crag and ruin'd wall.
I deem'd such nooks the sweetest shade
The sun in all its round survey'd;
And still I thought that shatter'd tower
The mightiest work of human power;
And marvell'd as the aged hind
With some strange tale bewitch'd my mind,
Of forayers, who, with headlong force,
Down from that strength had spurr'd their horse,
Their southern rapine to renew,
Far in the distant Cheviots blue,
And, home returning, fill'd the hall
With revel, wassel-rout, and brawl.
Methought that still with trump and clang
The gateway's broken arches rang;
Methought grim features, seam'd with scars,
Glar'd through the window's rusty bars,
And ever, by the winter hearth,
Old tales I heard of woe or mirth,
Of lovers' slights, or ladies' charms,
Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms;
Of patriot battles, won of old
By Wallace wight and Bruce the bold;
Of later fields of feud and fight,
When, pouring from their Highland height,

The Scottish clans, in headlong sway,
Had swept the scarlet ranks away.
While stretch'd at length upon the floor,
Again I fought each combat o'er,
Pebbles and shells, in order laid,
The mimic ranks of war displayed ;
And onward still the Scottish Lion bore,
And still the scattered Southron fled before.

Still, with vain fondness, could I trace,
Anew, each kind familiar face,
That brighten'd at our evening fire !
From the thatch'd mansion's grey-hair'd Sire,
Wise without learning, plain and good,
And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood ;
Whose eye, in age, quick, clear, and keen,
Show'd what in youth its glance had been ;

* * * * *

To him the venerable Priest,
Our frequent and familiar guest,
Whose life and manners well could paint
Alike the student and the saint ;
Alas ! whose speech too oft I broke
With gambol rude and timeless joke :
For I was wayward, bold, and wild,
A self-will'd imp, a grandame's child.
But half a plague, and half a jest,
Was still endured, beloved, caress'd.

As has been truly said, no poet has given to the world a picture of the dawning feelings of life and genius at once so simple, so beautiful, and so complete. The "venerable Priest" was the Rev. Alexander Duncan, D.D., minister of the parish (not the Rev. John Martin of Mertoun, as is sometimes stated), who had been translated from Traquair in 1743. Of literary tastes, he was the author of some religious manuals, but his largest work was a "History of the Revolution of 1688," published in 1790. Dr. Duncan was a familiar figure at Sandyknowe, "almost our only visitor," says Scott, and upon one occasion so sorely tried was he with the boy's vigorous ballad-spouting—"Hardyknute" had just been mastered—that he retaliated with the delightfully caustic remonstrance : "One may as well speak in the mouth of a cannon as where that child is ! "

Scott was just like other children. He liked to show off his new

toys and his new clothes, and being able to repeat some stanzas of a poem which had struck his fancy, we do not wonder at him thus obtruding his cleverness, even in the presence of the parish minister. Twenty years afterwards, in 1795, when on a visit to Smailholm, Scott called at the manse and found the old man feeble, but busy correcting the manuscript of what must have been his "Journal of the Rebellion of 1745," which was never published. "I found him emaciated to the last degree, wrapped in a tartan nightgown, and employing all the activity of health and youth in correcting a 'History of the Revolution' [Scott is in error here], which he intended should be given to the world when he was no more. He read me several passages with a voice naturally strong, and which the feelings of an author then raised above the depression of age and declining health. I begged him to spare this fatigue, which could not but injure his health. His answer was remarkable. 'I know,' he said, 'that I cannot survive a fortnight, and what signifies an exertion that can at worst only accelerate my death in a few days?'" He died within less than the period he assigned. (See "The Scott Originals," pp. 333–338.)

Like many others known to Scott in his boyhood, the historian-preacher of Smailholm has a niche in the great Temple of Waverley. Scott never forgot his old friend nor the "charming acidity" of his manner. In 1824, when writing "St. Ronan's Well," he fixed on him for the portrait, drawn with a deft pen, of the Rev. Josiah Cargill. "He not only indulged in neglect of dress and appearance," says Scott, "and all those ungainly tricks which men are apt to acquire by living very much alone, but besides, and especially, he became probably the most abstracted and absent man of a profession peculiarly liable to cherish such habits. No man fell so regularly into the painful dilemma of mistaking, or, in Scottish phrase, 'miskenning,' the person he spoke to, or more frequently inquired of an old maid for her husband, of a childless wife about her young people, of the distressed widower for the spouse at whose funeral he himself had assisted but a fortnight before; and none was ever more familiar with strangers whom he had never seen, or seemed more estranged from those who had a title to think themselves well known to him. The worthy man perpetually confounded sex, age, and

calling ; and when a blind beggar extended his hand for charity, he has been known to return the civility by taking off his hat, making a low bow, and hoping his worship was well."

The manse of Smailholm is also sketched in the novel. Dr. Duncan died in the eighty-seventh year of his age and fifty-eighth of his ministry. A broad "thruch" stone in the churchyard of Smailholm, with a short, simple inscription, commemorates this notable, worthy man. (See page 13). The church at Smailholm (in which there is a Scott Memorial window) dates as far back as the twelfth century, and was held, like many churches in the locality, by the Priory of Coldingham. Mention has been made of St. Cuthbert and his reputed upbringing at Rhuringaham, or Wrangholm. A constant tradition ascribes his birthplace to the Valley of the Leader, somewhere between Lauder and Earlston. One night, whilst tending his flocks by the riverside, a marvellous vision was vouchsafed to him, as he believed, no less than the passing of the soul of Aidan, saint of Lindisfarne, borne on angels' wings to heaven. This determined Cuthbert's future, and, hastening to Old Melrose, he sought an interview with Prior Boisil, and was received as a monk within the shrine by the beautiful bend of the Tweed. Another version speaks of him as living at Wrangholm with Kenspid, a widow, from the age of eight years until he entered the service of God. Wrangholm is extinct, and the only relic of its association with the most famous of Border saints, is the Coo Stane, (probably Cuthbert's Stone), which may be seen in a field a little to the east of the modern farm-steading of Brotherstone. Reference has been made to the legend of the Brethren Stanes, not unlike that of the Twinlaw Cairns visible on the sky-line of the distant Lammermoors. The two tall slabs of whinstone on the top of Brotherstone Hill, forming a conspicuous landmark in all directions, were placed there, it is said, in memory of a tragic incident of Reformation times, when twin brothers, parted in youth and far-travelled, met again, apparently as strangers, and, hotly disputing over the work of Knox and his followers, came at length to blows, by which both were slain. This, however, is improbable, for the name Brotherstone appears in documents long antecedent.

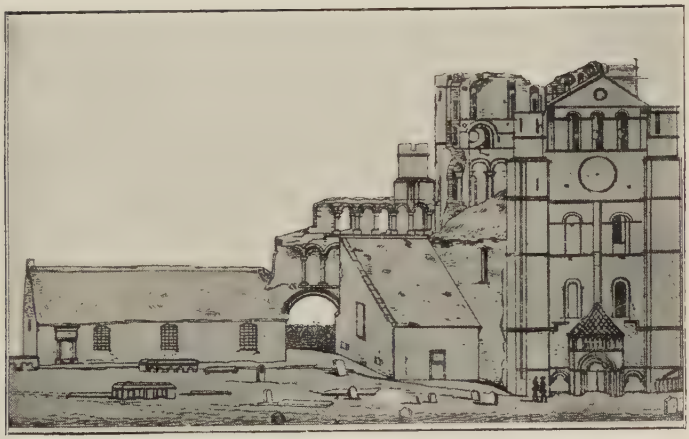
Most of these stories Walter Scott would be familiar with in

his boyhood. His grandmother, Barbara Haliburton, born and brought up in the neighbourhood, had known them from her girlhood days, and from her, together with his aunt and the cow-bailie, there were few of them that he did not know. This was the first "making," as his friend Shortreed afterwards put it, of the future novelist. Scott was a precocious child. At three, his grandfather died, and he remembered distinctly the writing and sealing of funeral letters, and all the ceremonial of the melancholy procession as it set out from Sandyknowe. At four, he "deaved" the parish minister with his recital of "Hardyknute." At five, he had his introduction to "Shakespeare" in the theatre at Bath, whither he sojourned for a season, when the play "As You Like It" was presented. "An't they brothers?" he exclaimed, in sincere surprise, at the quarrel scene between Orlando and Oliver. It was at Bath, too, that he met John Home, the reverend author of "Douglas." At six, he drew towards him the whole soul of Alison Rutherford, winsome writer of the "Flowers of the Forest." At seven, he was back at Sandyknowe, roaming about with old Ormiston, gathering up a fresh budget of stories, and, on his pet sheltie Marion, careering about the fields, and even over the rough crags about the Tower, to the horror of his relatives. By the time he had reached his eighth year he had learned much in the school of Nature. His imagination had been quickened in the free, unfettered life of the country. The time had gone when in the midst of the thunderstorm he was discovered among the knowes, fearlessly watching the lightning flashes, and crying out in his ecstasy, "Bonnie, bonnie! dae't again, dae't again!" It was here he had his first comprehension of the weird and awful in Nature, and where also the gentler emotions took hold of him in his first fellowship among the sheep and lambs. That had given his mind, he confessed when he was sixty, on that very spot, to Skene of Rubislaw, a peculiar tenderness for those animals which it had ever since retained.

So ended the happy days at Sandyknowe with all their fascinating child-pictures. There was the coming of Death, the great Interrupter, and other circumstances, which led to the inevitable giving up of the farm. Those who remained of the family circle removed to Kelso, six miles distant, taking up their

SCOTT AT THE AGE OF SIX YEARS

(From the Miniature at Abbotsford)



KELSO GRAMMAR SCHOOL IN SCOTT'S DAY

From a contemporary sketch)

residence in what, then called Garden Cottage, is now much altered and known as Waverley Lodge. Young Walter returned to his parents' home in Edinburgh to commence the soberer tasks of school. At the High School he was not long in attaining the Rector's own class, that don in Latinity and Roman antiquities, Dr. Alexander Adam. Notwithstanding his somewhat meteoric flashes, and his professed disregard for the canons of scholarship, preferring the horseplay of the "Yards" to the concentration of the desk, Scott ingratiated himself with the famous teacher. He became a kind of favourite pupil, and among the papers left by Dr. Adam at his death were discovered some lines carefully wrapped up in a cover, and inscribed "Walter Scott, July 1783." These are among the first specimens of that poetical genius which, twenty-two years later, was to flash on the world. In 1783 Scott left the High School, and almost immediately we find him at his aunt's cottage at Kelso. The ties were strong and true that bound him to the Tweedside town. And with that same buoyancy of spirit which on very similar errands characterized his after life, we can imagine him, while still the slow school-hours moved on, counting forward to the day that was to bring him to the Border.

PAGE 11.—A Latin epitaph, composed by Professor George Stewart, for a Memorial slab in the Church of Smailholm, was never utilized—no Memorial being erected. This epitaph appeared in the *Scots Magazine* for June, 1796, and is as follows:

M.S.
VIRI REVERENDI
ALEXANDER DUNCAN, S.S.T.T.
QUI NON MAGIS MORIBUS INCORRUPTIS
QUAM INGENII DOTIBUS CONSPICUUS
SACRA FIDELITER ET FELICITER EXERCUIT
IN HAC ECCLESIA PERANNOS QUINQUAGINTA DUOS
IN SOLATIUM AUDITORUM
QUOS MILITIA CHRISTIANO INITIATOS
ASSIDUE ET EXEMPLO IMITATIONE DIGNO
CONFIRMAVERAT:
VIRTUS DIREXIT INTEGRITAS SIGNAVIT
MENS SIBI CONSCIA RECTI
OMNES AETATIS EJUS GRADUS
COMITATA EST
OBIIT MULTUM DESIDERATUS A.D. 1795
ANNO AETATIS OCTOGESIMO SEPTIMO
PRID. KALEND. OCTOB. ANNO DOMINI, 1795.

CHAPTER II

THE EARLY YEARS—KELSO AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS

ONE can scarcely estimate the influence of the Kelso years on the life of Scott. At the age of twelve he paid his first lengthened visit to the place, and for at least half a year it was his home. The fresh, pure air from the Tweed, so beneficial to him in earlier life, was helpful also in bracing him up against the too rapid growth which had begun to tell on his constitutional strength. Scott had bright recollections of those months at Kelso. To that time, he tells us, he could trace distinctly the awakening of that delightful feeling for the beauties of natural objects which never deserted him through life: "the love of natural beauty, more especially when combined with ancient ruins, or remains of our fathers' piety or splendour, became with me an insatiable passion, which, if circumstances had permitted, I would willingly have gratified by travelling over half the globe." He describes Kelso as the "most beautiful if not the most romantic village in Scotland, presenting objects not only grand in themselves, but venerable for their association." The meeting of two superb rivers, the Tweed and the Teviot, both famous in song; the picturesqueness of their banks; the ruins of an ancient abbey; the more distant remains of Roxburgh Castle; the princely residence of Floors—all combined to render Kelso one of the most desirable spots in the Border country. Modern Kelso is no less attractive. The beauty of the place has grown more and more since Scott's day. Bonnier than ever does it stand by the pleasant banks of Tweed. So that there are few who will deny to the fine old town its proud but merited title, "Queen of the Borders."

It was here that Scott began to gather up his intellectual gains and make his friendly conquests. The romantic Smailholm life was only a stepping-stone to the richer experience of Kelso. The former was his cradling-ground in romance; the latter, more than any other place, was the home of his boyhood, where he had

his first definite appreciations of the scope and the value of romance.

And though it is true that he cared more for the open air than the close confinement of a schoolroom—to roam by Tweedside or go bird-nesting in the splendid policies of the Floors was more to his taste than a prosy pondering over Persius and Tacitus—still, he made progress in his studies, and became daily fitter for the higher position of a University student. The old Grammar School of Kelso, which Scott attended during this period, and where he seems to have also acted as a kind of pupil-teacher, immediately adjoined the abbey. It is the low building to the left in the illustration, and has long since disappeared. The graveyard, being practically unenclosed, was turned into a veritable playground, and no commoner sight was to be seen than a score or so of youngsters climbing the ruined walls of the abbey, prying into the recesses of its dungeons, or making "louping-on stones" of the huge square "thruchs" with which the place abounded. Scott's writings have many references to spots about the abbey. One vault was long used as the tolbooth of the town, and is the original of the prison which the blue-gown Edie Ochiltree declared "wasna sae dooms bad a place as it was ca'd. Ye had aye a guid roof ower your head to fend aff the weather, and, if the windows werena glazed, it was the mair airy and pleasant for the summer season. And there were folk enow to crack wi', and he had bread enough to eat, and what need to fash himsel' about the rest o't?" A strong feature of Scott's boyhood, as of his whole life, was his keenly observant sense. He was "gleg" beyond most of his years, wonderfully quick at questions, shining where cleverer lads had no chance, seeming never to apply himself in the orthodox fashion, yet coming somehow to the front at the fit opportunity. His memory was a marvel of correct impressions. He made use of his eyes to the highest advantage, and all these, wedded to a singularly subtle imagination, were capable of producing the most powerful effects. Thus are some of the apparently trifling things in the earlier career of Scott afterwards lit up with a freshness of charm and interest only possible with one who was a cunning craftsman and strong master of his art.

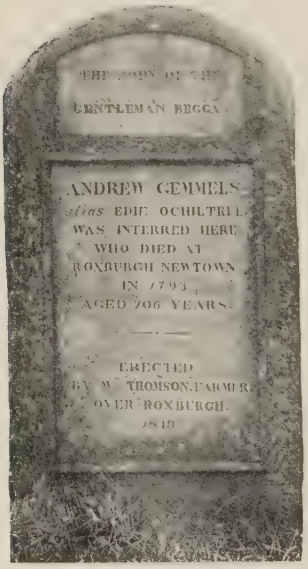
The Rector of the Grammar School during Scott's Kelso years

was Lancelot Whale, son of Andrew Whale, schoolmaster of Earlston, a notable teacher, a worthy man, and an early believer in his pupil's future. "In point of knowledge and taste he was far too good," says Scott, "for the situation he held. My time with him, though short, was spent greatly to my advantage and his gratification; as perusing these Latin authors with one who began to understand them was to him a labour of love, I made considerable progress under his instructions." Whale's name was characteristic of his appearance. He was of prodigious size—between six and seven feet high, almost as grotesque and ungainly as Dominie Sampson himself, to whom he is said to have borne other striking resemblances. It was natural for his pupils to indulge in puns at the expense of the good man. What youth could have resisted it? Such epithets as "an odd fish," and sundry references to Jonah, etc., were hurled at his devoted head; while Robert Whale, his son, who became a surgeon in the army, was dubbed with the more regal title of the "Prince of Wales," the father having insisted on him dropping the letter *h* out of his name.*

It was at Lancelot Whale's seminary that Scott's acquaintance began with the brothers Ballantyne, who were destined to come so closely into his life. The Ballantynes were a Border family. John Ballantyne, the father, was a merchant in Kelso, with a shop in the Square, stocked with everything from a needle to an anchor. James, the eldest of his three sons, was born in Kelso in 1770, and was thus a year older than Scott, whom he met for the first time in 1783 as a fellow-pupil at the Grammar School. Between the two boys a companionship of no ordinary kind was struck up. Even then Scott had all the charm of the story-teller, and in James Ballantyne he found an eager, untiring listener. It was their almost daily practice to wander by the Tweed, or along the road leading to the old Smailholm home, Scott all the while pouring forth story after story from his apparently exhaustless supply. "He was then," says Ballantyne, "devoted to antiquarian lore, and was certainly the best story-teller I ever heard, either then or since. He soon discovered that I was as fond of listening as he himself was of relating; and I remember

* He died at Lyne, Peeblesshire, in 1793, aged 28. His tombstone there records his name as Robert Wales.

RUINED ROXBURGH



"EDIE OCHILTREE'S" GRAVESTONE *Page 26*

it was a thing of daily occurrence that after he had made himself master of his own lesson, I, alas ! being still sadly to seek in mine, he used to whisper to me, ' Come, slink over beside me, Jamie, and I'll tell you a story.' " Ballantyne left school about 1785, and became indentured to a solicitor in Kelso. Scott had returned to Edinburgh, and the intimacy was not resumed until the year 1788, and then only slightly, at the meetings of the University Teviotdale Club, to which both Ballantyne, now a Scots Law student, and Scott, who was attending the Civil Law classes, belonged. The former, in 1795, set up as a writer in his native town ; and soon after, in 1797, as the result of a strong representation made to him to establish a newspaper on Conservative lines in opposition to the democratic *British Chronicle*, he founded the *Kelso Mail*, now the oldest newspaper on the Borders. Once, after a business visit to London, Ballantyne had found it necessary to travel to Glasgow for the purchase of types, and in the stage-coach he found, much to his delight, his whilom schoolmate and friend. A very few miles re-established them on their ancient footing. There was plenty of leisure for talk, and " Mr. Scott was exactly what is called the old man." He abounded, as in the days of his boyhood, in legendary lore. Hour after hour sped on, and with pleasant song and tale they passed the time until Edinburgh was reached, and, says Ballantyne, " from that day until within a very short time of his death—a period of not less than five-and-thirty years—I may venture to say that our intercourse never flagged." The later relationships of Scott with James Ballantyne and his brother John, as printer, publisher, and partner, are well known. In 1799 there was issued from the *Mail* office one of the first of Scott's publications, " An Apology for Tales of Terror," consisting of some nine ballads in a well-printed quarto of seventy-six pages, of which only twelve copies were thrown off. This was the initial effort of what afterwards became the celebrated Border or Ballantyne Press. In 1802 the first two volumes of the " Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border " were sent forth to the world from the Kelso Press, the elegance and accuracy of whose typography evoked the highest admiration . By the end of 1802 Ballantyne had removed to Edinburgh and set up his small establishment of two printing-presses in the neighbourhood of Holyrood. In 1805 Scott joined

him as co-partner, sinking £5,000 in the business, and for a time there was brilliant success. In 1809, piqued with Constable, he floated the publishing and book-selling firm of John Ballantyne and Co., which only lasted four years. In 1826, on the collapse of Constable, the great crash came, the biggest literary financial failure of the century, which practically left Scott liable to his creditors for no less a sum than £130,000. John Ballantyne died in 1821, and James in 1833. The third brother, Alexander, held in high esteem by Scott, conducted the *Kelso Mail* from 1806 to 1826. He was the father of the famous author, R. M. Ballantyne —favourite of boys all the world over.

Another friendship formed by Scott during his Kelso sojourn was with Mrs. Waldie, the Quaker lady of Hendersyde, at whose town-house in the Bridge Street, brought hither by her son, his school-fellow, Robert Waldie, he spent many happy hours. The fine library, which now exists much enlarged, at Hendersyde Park the seat of her descendant, attracted him. He was allowed to rummage through it at pleasure, and to carry home any volume he might fancy. Those visits to the Waldies suggested to Scott the sweet Quaker home of Mount Sharon in " Redgauntlet," with its kindly, hospitable inmates, Joshua Geddes and his sister Rachel.

What a fullness of pleasure he was able to draw out of those early Kelso associations ! Every day new avenues of knowledge in the world of Nature and in books were opening up before him. For one who had felt the witchery of the Sandyknowe peat-fire, with its wealth of ballad and traditionary lore, the perusal of a work like Percy's " Reliques " must have been a revelation and a deep well-spring of delight. From a Kelso Library (now defunct) he borrowed the volumes, and in his cottage paradise, under the shade of a great spreading plane-tree, he so devoured their pages that time and the physical necessities were alike forgotten. " I remember well the spot," he says, " where I read those volumes for the first time. It was beneath a huge platanus, in the ruins of what had been intended for an old-fashioned arbour in the garden I have mentioned. The summer day sped onward so fast that, notwithstanding the sharp appetite of thirteen, I forgot the hour of dinner, was sought for with anxiety, and was found still entranced in my intellectual banquet. To

read and to remember was in this instance the same thing, and henceforth I overwhelmed my school-fellows, and all who would hearken to me, with tragical recitations from the ballads of Bishop Percy. The first time, too, I could scrape a few shillings together, which were not common occurrences with me, I bought unto myself a copy of these beloved volumes ; nor do I believe I ever read a book half so frequently or with half the enthusiasm." This was but the beginning of similar studies, from books, and through that large unwritten literature of history and tradition which was still floating about among the people.

At the winter session of 1783 Scott entered the Humanity and Greek classes of the University, but the very next year a recurrence of delicate health sent him back to Kelso. In the interval there had been formed an additional attraction for those years of going and coming between Edinburgh and the Borders. His father's brother, Robert Scott, a naval Captain in the East India Company's service, had retired from his profession, and acquired the property of Rosebank, on the east side of Kelso, and lying close in to the Tweed. The Captain was Scott's favourite uncle. More, indeed, than the boy's father did he enter with the liveliest sympathy into all the plans and pursuits of his nephew. Rosebank came to be Scott's second home until he had a home of his own. Captain Scott was a bachelor, so he installed his sister, Aunt Jenny, into Rosebank as housekeeper, where she remained until her death in 1805. Another sister, Mrs. Curle, the widow of William Curle, farmer at Yetbyre, in Dumfriesshire, resided at a short distance from Rosebank. She died in 1826. With frequent visits to Kelso during the summer recesses, and when free for a time from the prosaic routine of a lawyer's office—" the dry and barren wilderness of forms and conveyances " to which Scott had become apprenticed to his father in 1786—so the hurrying years swept on. " Scott's life," says Ruskin, " was in all the joyful strength of it spent in the Valley of the Tweed. Rosebank, in the Lower Tweed, gave him his close knowledge of the district of Flodden Field, and his store of foot-traveller's interest in every glen of Ettrick, Yarrow, and Liddel Water." He made frequent excursions to Norham during this period, and far into Northumberland, missing nothing of note on either Border. With alert eye, clear head, and marvellous memory, he made the very best

of what was both to be seen and heard. He was " makin' himsel' a' the time," laying up stores of treasure against the years untried and unknown.

Scott was called to the Bar in 1792, and five years later, after a somewhat bitter experience of slighted love, he married the daughter of a French Royalist, Charlotte Margaret Charpentier, or Carpenter, whom he met during a holiday in the English Lake District. They settled down to a winter domicile in North Castle Street, Edinburgh, and for a summer residence a sweet little cottage at Lasswade, " by Esk's fair streams that run," where six happy years of married life were spent. In 1799 Scott was appointed to the Sheriffship of Selkirkshire. In 1804 Captain Scott died at Rosebank, and the property passed to Walter, as his uncle's heir. But he sold it a few months afterwards for £5,000, much to the chagrin of the Kelsonians, who declared that the estate had been sacrificed " to meet the extravagancies of a graceless nephew." So ended Scott's immediate connection with this town of pleasant memories.

Having glanced at Scott's Kelso life, let us look at the town itself and at other of its associations. The place boasts a hoar antiquity. Around the great Castle of Roxburgh and the " fair Abbaye " of the " sair sanct," two original townships sprang up. That at Roxburgh became in time an important centre, one of the four principal royal burghs in Scotland, with a church, a school of note, mills, and a mint-house. By and by the town of Roxburgh, nestling beneath the castle walls, extended itself with a kind of suburban dignity. To the east arose the new town of Roxburgh, while westward, within what are now the grounds of Floors Castle, there grew up another village community. When, in 1128, the abbey was founded, a new settlement gathered around it, and, making rapid extensions, became united to its nearest neighbour, the two forming " the town of the chalk-hill " Calchou or Kelso.

The history of Kelso is largely the history of Roxburgh Castle, the most famous, as it was by far the strongest, of the Border fortresses. Built by the Saxons of Northumbria, on a highly defensible position, a natural bulwark on the peninsula between the Tweed and the Teviot, it was held by them for long years as a kind of capital—the Marchidun or Marchmound of their kingdom.

As time wore on, and Scotland began to take shape, when we are able to throw off the dust of tradition, and get at the facts of history, the place had become the abode of David I.—his favourite residence, the Rawicsburg, Rokisburg, or Roxburgh of days more stirring. Few castles had a more brilliant or a more chequered story. Here the royal Saint held Court. Here he planned those noble abbeys whose very ruins are the boast of the Borderland. Within its walls Alexander II. was married and Alexander III. was born. Many times were the English Sovereigns entertained at Roxburgh with the most regal magnificence. Parliaments met here, judges decreed justice, military operations were discussed, and ecclesiastical controversies settled. In the town beneath weekly markets and great fairs were held.* Money was coined at it. It had a vigorous commercial life. All kinds of interests converged towards it as a great provincial capital. For 300 years it was the most flourishing township on the Borders, with the stateliest fortress in the most winsome nook of Nature. Scenes of many a gay gathering, of many a deed of gallantry, of many a rough shock of battle, both perished at length, leaving scarcely a fragment to show where they had stood. In 1460 occurred the most memorable and melancholy siege in Scottish history, when James II. determined to capture the castle from the English who had long held it. Every man between the age of sixteen and sixty, it is said, was summoned to the task. What a day for Tweedside and the Teviot! The Scottish arms triumphed, and the enemy were driven out; but the pride of victory and joy at having their own again were rudely quenched by the unhappy and untimely death of the soldier-Sovereign. Whilst watching the discharge of a big Flemish gun—the "Lion," about 3,000 pounds in weight, not long introduced into the country—the piece suddenly burst. A heavy splinter struck the King and killed him on the spot. Soon afterwards the castle was razed to the ground and all future attempts to refortify it were without fruit. Standing to-day by the ruins of old Roxburgh, where the sheep crop its green mounds, and the ancient ash-trees bend their branches amid the sole

* St. James's Fair, so named from the patron saint of the place, still held on August 5, and the most popular gathering on the Borders, may be a relic of those early times. The fair ground is on the site of the ancient town of Roxburgh.

remnants of its once massive masonry, and recalling the memorable scenes that have been witnessed—incidents moulding the character, and out of which grew the consolidation, of the Scottish people, and in which every rank and condition bore a part—one cannot fail to find a suggestive object-lesson of the instability of all earthly affairs and the overthrow that may await them. John Leyden, with keen insight for a historic past, thus apostrophizes this place of mingled memories :

> " Roxburgh ! how fallen, since first, in Gothic pride,
> Thy frowning battlements the war defied,
> Called the bold chief to grace thy blazoned halls,
> And bade the rivers gird thy solid walls !
> Fallen are thy towers, and, where the palace stood,
> In gloomy grandeur waves yon hanging wood ;
> Crushed are thy halls, save where the peasant sees
> One moss-clad ruin rise between the trees ;
> The still-green trees, whose mournful branches wave
> In solemn cadence, o'er the hapless brave,
> Proud castle ! Fancy still beholds thee stand
> The curb, the guardian of this Border land,
> As when the signal flame that blazed afar,
> And bloody flag, proclaimed impending war ;
> While, in the lion's place, the leopard frowned,
> And marshalled armies hemmed thy bulwarks round."

Some enchanting pictures frame themselves through the greenery of the castle mound. One of the finest views of Floors is to be had from this point—a striking contrast to the desolation round about. The ducal domain of Floors—the French *Fleurs* (so sometimes the name was spelled)—is without a rival in the South of Scotland. Sir Walter Scott wrote of it that " the modern mansion of Fleurs, with its terrace, its woods, and its extensive lawns, form altogether a kingdom for Oberon or Titania to dwell in, or any spirit who, before their time, might love scenery, of which the majesty and even the beauty impress the mind with a sense of awe mingled with pleasure." Probably the earliest reference to the place is in the time of James VI., when the notorious " Habbie Ker," of Cessford, first Earl of Roxburghe, one of the most powerful, as well as one of the most feared, noblemen of his time, obtained possession of it. The modern palatial abode is the result of a huge scheme of reconstruction and ornamentation in 1839 on the old house built in 1718 by Sir

John Vanbrugh, dramatist and architect, for the first holder of the ducal title. The charming situation of Floors, and the wide sweep of ground attaching to it, the stately parks, the magnificent suite of gardens and conservatories, render it a princely residence not easily surpassed in either Scotland or England.

But we must get back to Kelso. On the way we pass "the meeting of the waters"—the junction of Teviot and Tweed—a singularly impressive picture, of which Leyden and Andrew Scott of Bowden have both sweetly sung:

> "Teviot, farewell! for now thy silver tide
> Commix'd with Tweed's pellucid stream shall glide."

It was just about here where, according to the oft-told tradition, Michael Scot's familiar "bridled the Tweed with a curb of stone." There is a majestic stateliness about the kingly river as it glides past Springwood and beneath Rennie's finely-arched bridge, model of the Waterloo Bridge at London. The whole charm of the town is in front. Seen from the bridge, or from the higher bend of the road by Maxwellheugh, Kelso looks an ideal township, a queen among towns; and there are few who will not assent to the feeling of Burns when, during his Border tour, he is said to have gazed upon it from this spot, reverently uncovering and breathing a prayer of thanksgiving to the Almighty. The venerable abbey, like some antique Titan predominating over the dwarfs of a later world, the shapely spires, the variety of colour, the rich profusion of foliage, the glorious background of hills with their long wooded strips, and the river right at one's feet, make up a picture which is never forgotten. It needs once to be seen to be remembered.

The most noble and notable relic about Kelso is, of course, its Abbey. Though it has neither the romance of Melrose nor the classical associations of Dryburgh, it held a prominant place in the ecclesiastical world of its time, and its endowments and benefices were the richest and largest in the kingdom. Founded by David I. in 1128—four years after his coronation, while residing at his favourite castle of Roxburgh—it was dedicated to the Virgin and St. John the Evangelist. A colony of Tironensian monks—a Benedictine Order founded by the Elder St. Bernard—had been settled at Selkirk in 1131, but was transferred to Kelso,

and began forthwith the work of rearing the new edifice, which was not completed for at least a hundred years. This abbey is said to be the finest example of the castellated style of ecclesiastical architecture in Scotland. In general character it is Late Norman, with here and there a touch of Early Pointed work. Many parts exhibit an unusual sweetness of symmetry, particularly the north portal, which is much admired.

The Kelso monks knew how to blend their religion with the common crafts of the day. Some of them were carpenters, some masons and stone-cutters, others lead and iron workers and artists in stained glass, while others, again, were skilful tillers of the soil. It was a main feature of their system to keep themselves constantly employed. Mere seclusion was regarded an incentive to temptation, and even as a sin. And in this way, by assiduous cultivation of the useful arts and their own mental and spiritual discipline, with the exercise of a wise benevolence, did their abbey grow in grace of form and strength of character to be the most influential religious house in Scotland. Its Abbot received the mitre, bringing to the abbey precedence over all monastic institutions in the country. By the time of Baliol and the Second Interregnum it is said to have possessed no fewer than thirty-six churches, several manor-houses, and many lands, granges, farms, mills, breweries, fishings, rights of cutting turf, salt works, and other properties spread over the shires of Roxburgh, Berwick, Selkirk, Peebles, Lanark, Ayr, Dumfries, and as far north as Aberdeen, and southward in the counties of Northumberland and Durham.

In historic incident, however, Kelso Abbey is not rich. Within its walls lies the dust of Henry, only son and heir-apparent of the founder. Here also Bishop David de Bernham and other dignitaries were interred. James III. was crowned in the abbey, immediately after the tragedy at Roxburgh. Like other abbeys, it had its share of ceremony and festivity. We may be sure it was the scene of many a courtly pageant. There were the times of peace, when civilization progressed by leaps and bounds; when monk and soldier and citizen vied with each other in the bloodless triumphs of art and learning. Still, the story of Kelso is mostly one of disaster and doom. It is the sad record of the Border abbeys. How keen and determined has been the struggle

KELSO

KELSO ABBEY

Now under the care of H.M. Commissioners of Works.

for the mastery around them ! Each stands, grand and noble in its ruins, a silent witness to the malignity and misplaced zeal that prompted their downfall. At Kelso the first blow fell during the Independence Wars, when the monastery was laid waste and its inmates reduced to comparative beggary. The building itself appears to have escaped the ravages of that time, for no trace of restoration in the Decorated or Perpendicular style of the period has been found. But neither Kelso nor any other establishment in the Middle Marches was spared the violence of the later English invasions under Dacre, and Surrey, and, worst of all, the haughty Hertford—Henry VIII.'s merciless minions. The final stand at Kelso in 1545 is a pitiful memory. Hertford brought all his strength against the edifice, cannonading its walls and putting the brave defenders to the sword. A few surviving monks and others took refuge in the tower in the hope of being able in some way to save themselves and the church ; but the stout walls had not been built to withstand the shock of English artillery, and could not hold out long. To bring matters to a crisis, a band of foreign mercenaries effected an entrance to the abbey just as darkness began to fall. The survivors in the steeple held their own all night, some of them escaping at daydawn. The place, now completely at the mercy of the enemy, was demolished and defaced. Further destruction came from the Reforming zealots of 1560 and 1580, and though the building was partly restored and used as a Protestant place of worship—as the parish church—its desolation is now complete. Of that

> " No legend needs to tell,
> For story's pen must fail to write
> What ruin paints so well."

Within the town and in the immediate vicinity are many other objects and places of interest. From the Chalkheugh Terrace, whence Kelso derives its name, a view, rivalling that from the bridge, unfolds itself.

> " There rolls the Teviot in her crystal pride,
> Anxious to meet the Tweed—a longing bride ; "

while

> " Blue o'er the river Kelso's shadow lies,
> And copse-clad isles amid the waters rise."

The ever-present Eildons are a prominent feature in the distance.

Ruined Roxburgh, and the stately pile of Floors, like some enchanted palace of Eastern fable, appear close at hand. With wealth of woodland beauty and the sweetest of green meadows, all the qualities forming a perfect landscape are here. One is reminded of the lordly Rhine in the broad sweep of the united rivers, the whole scene, indeed, wearing a kind of Continental aspect.

The district of Kelso abounds in pleasing literary associations in addition to those already mentioned. The next chapter deals with the poet of "The Seasons," born at Ednam, in the near neighbourhood. At Roxburgh Churchyard, some two miles from the castle ruins, is the grave of Andrew Gemmels, the "Edie Ochiltree" of the "Antiquary." Originally a dragoon, in active service during the wars of Anne and the first Georges, the last fifty years of his life were spent as a wandering beggar, or *gaberlunzie*, of the "beadsman" or "blue-gown" class. Few figures were more familiar over the length and breadth of the Border. He made his "calls" at certain houses, generally twice a year, and at most of them he was received rather as an old acquaintance of the family than as a mendicant. Scott met him frequently, and has described him as "a remarkably fine old figure, very tall, and maintaining a soldier-like or military manner and address. His features were intelligent, with a powerful expression of sarcasm. His motions were always so graceful that he might almost have been suspected of having studied them; for he might, on any occasion, have served as a model for an artist, so remarkably striking were his ordinary attitudes. He had little of the cant of his calling; his wants were food and shelter, or a trifle of money, which he always claimed, and seemed to receive, as his due. He sang a good song, told a good story, and could crack a severe jest with all the acumen of Shakespeare's jesters, though without using, like them, the cloak of insanity. It was some fear of Andrew's satire, as much as a feeling of kindness or charity, which secured him the general good reception which he enjoyed everywhere." He died in his hundred and sixth year at Roxburgh on March 31, 1793. Many anecdotes have been related of his sarcastic wit and eccentricities. The quaint moulding on the back of his tombstone is an illustration of one of the best of these. The occasion was a St. Boswells Fair,

where a recruiting-sergeant, clad in all the dazzle of cockade and red coat, with medals gleaming on his breast, declaimed in impassioned heroics about the delights of a soldier's life—the glory of it, the patriotism, the plunder, the prospect of promotion for the bold and young, and His Majesty's munificent pension for the old and the wounded. A crowd of gaping rustics were standing round, some of whom the man of war and words hoped, no doubt, to persuade to the shilling. He had just reached the end of a harangue of more than usual eloquence, when the tatter-demalion Gemmels, standing close behind him, reared aloft his meal-poke on the end of his *kent*, or staff, and exclaimed with a tone and aspect of profound derision, "Behold the end o't!" The contrast was irresistible: the beau-idéal of the sergeant and the ragged reality of the ex-dragoon were sufficiently striking; and the former, with his bedecked followers, beat a retreat in some confusion amidst loud and universal laughter.

Names well known in the world of art and letters gather around Kelso. Sir William Fairbairn, the engineer, began life as a labourer at Kelso Bridge. Sir John Pirie, from a grocer's apprentice in the Mill Wynd, rose to be Lord Mayor of London. Robert Edmonstone, the artist, hardly realized the promise of his genius, dying in the prime of life. William Jerdan, critic and journalist, had his first experience of newspaper work in a Border printing-office. Horatius Bonar was a Kelso divine for nearly thirty years. Here many of his hymns were written, and the "Kelso Tracts" are not yet forgotten. In the same church Sir William Robertson Nicoll, well-known editor and critic, fulfilled an eight-years' ministry. Nor can we forget Thomas Tod Stoddart, prince of Border anglers, racy rhymer of the rod and reel, the perusal of whose "Death-wake" first sent George Macdonald to the writing of verse. His daughter, Anna M. Stoddart, was biographer of Professor Blackie, whose own forbears were natives of "Tempë, on the banks of Tweed." Kelso has its civil and ecclesiastical annalists in James Haig, James Morton, and James Tait. And in his home at Springwood Park, Sir George Douglas, a baronet after Scott's own fancy, essayist and novelist, cultivates well the muse, and as historian has done yeoman service in the field of Border literature.

CHAPTER III

WITH THE POET OF "THE SEASONS"

THE Scottish Border is the home of romance and song. There is scarcely a parish but has produced some singer more or less notable. Sir Walter was the great Minstrel. Next to him come James Hogg and John Leyden, with a host of others who have added, and still add to the poetic pile. It is computed that in the Border counties alone there have been about five hundred persons who have professed predilection for the "divine art." Not all, of course, can be claimed as poets "weaving in silvery line the thoughts of man." The majority, it must be confessed, are little more than mere stringers-together of rhyme. The number, however, is remarkable for so small an area, and there are not lacking compositions of real merit—gems of exquisite grace and finish—amidst much of an insipid and ephemeral character.

The county of Roxburgh bears the palm for contributions to a minstrelsy which is more than local. The poets of Teviotdale are known all the world over. Of Scott it cannot be said but that he belongs to them. So do Hogg and Leyden, though their scope is more circumscribed. The poet of "The Seasons" is in the Scott category. He is by no means local, nor is his verse associated with any particular district, though he dearly loved the Vale of the Tweed and its tributaries. He has been so identified with England that it is somewhat difficult to remember his birth and upbringing. A few not very direct references are all that his writings show regarding his early life by the Border burnsides and braes.

It is now more than two centuries since the birth of James Thomson at Ednam, one of the prettiest parishes on the Borders. Situated only a couple of miles or so to the north-east of Kelso, the visitor should not miss this early shrine of a great poet. Ednam, or Edenham, "the hamlet by the smooth-flowing stream," is one of the oldest ecclesiastical erections in the kingdom.

The gift, towards the end of the twelfth century, of King Edgar to Long Thor of Northumbria, who founded a church there in honour of St. Cuthbert, the place has never grown beyond the simple village character which it still presents. Its chief claim to remembrance is the connection it has with the author of "The Seasons" and "Rule, Britannia." Thomson was born at the manse of Ednam* in the September of 1700. The date is disputed, some authorities giving the 7th, others declaring for the 11th. It is, at any rate, certain that he was baptized on the 15th. His father, the Rev. Thomas Thomson, a pious, worthy man, son of a gardener to the Edmonstones, who long held the estate of Ednam, was the parish minister, the first after the Revolution, ordained in 1692, when in his twenty-fifth year. His mother was Beatrix Trotter, of Berwickshire descent, daughter of the Laird of Wide Open, a property on Kale Water, in the parish of Morebattle. The poet was the fourth of their nine children. After eight years of faithful ministry at Ednam, Thomas Thomson was translated to Southdean, at the south end of the same county, when his son was just two months old. There he spent the remainder of his life, dying in 1716. It was at Southdean where James Thomson may be said to have caught the poet's inspiration. Ednam is dear to us as his birthplace, though the old house is long since gone. It is improbable that he ever visited the place in later life, and the picturesqueness of the spot has not been reflected in his verse. But it is different with Southdean. That parish was his poetic nurse. Here he lived till the age of fifteen, when he entered the University. And during these years he, too, like Scott, was "making himself." The natural features of Southdean are practically the same to-day as during Thomson's youth. By the landscapes and nooks of beauty which filled and thrilled his boyhood's vision it is possible to catch up the spirit of his imperishable lines. From the modern manse of Southdean, we may look out on the scenes which Thomson saw. Southdean Law is close at hand. The Jed's pure, sparkling stream sweeps past, just as it did when Thomson was a boy. Many a time he must have stood by its bank and beheld it "wide o'er the brim, with torrent swelled."

* It has been stated that he was born in a smaller house adjoining the manse, but this seems a mistake.

Behind us rises the dark mass of Ruberslaw—sacred also to John Leyden—while in the distance, bounding the sky-line, is the great Border barrier of Cheviot, with Carter Fell filling a considerable arc of the horizon. On every side are objects on which the eye of the poet must have rested, and with the genius of a great artist, they have been limned in his immortal verse. Beyond a doubt, those early impressions at Southdean, through the charmed circle of the varying year, fastened themselves with strong, keen feeling upon his affections and memory. He was during this time a cheerful, happy boy, tracing the windings and playing on the banks of the Jed, visiting the shepherd and the ploughman in the fields, and viewing the whole country round with a delighted eye. Rocks, vales, rivers, and woody heights nourished his poetic taste, and his early writings show the keenness of his observation.

For three years the youth attended the Grammar School of Jedburgh, then kept in an aisle of the Abbey, eight miles distant, and with frequent visits to Ancrum, Hobkirk—where lived his good friend Riccaltoun—Minto, and Marlefield-on-Kale,* his education was pursued amid the most congenial environment. James Thomson was destined for the ministry of the Church of Scotland, but difficulties cropped up, and, dissatisfied otherwise with himself, he drifted into literature. It is said that the Professor of Divinity declined to sustain his trial discourses, or, at all events, criticised them unkindly. But he did not care for the ministry, and it was perhaps as well. To be a literary man and a Londoner was the summit of his ambition, and he attained it. The first part of "The Seasons"—"Winter"—was published in 1726, and brought him a paltry three guineas. But that was only the first rung of the ladder; by-and-by he climbed it, step by step, to fame and popularity. When he died, he was just turning forty-nine—the age at which his father succumbed—and in spite of much exasperating indolence he had accomplished a genuine bit of work for his country. Had he written nothing else but "Rule, Britannia," which unquestionably is his own composition, that would be sufficient to inscribe him amongst the immortals. James Thomson had all a patriot's fire, if his verse

* In Eckford parish, believed by some to be the scene of the "Gentle Shepherd." Sir William Bennet was the friend of Ramsay and Thomson, and both poets were his frequent guests.

is not always characterized by stirring martial appeals or glorification of the historic. He was essentially the poet of peace—a man whose communings with Nature quickened his imagination as nothing else could, and sent him singing of her calm, sweet victories "more renowned than war." And the religious element was by no means lacking. His poems show him to have been a profoundly fervent soul. Who but one of the deepest spiritual reverence could have uttered the prayer:

> "Father of light, and life! thou Good Supreme!
> O teach me what is good, teach me Thyself,
> Save me from folly, vanity and vice,
> From every low pursuit, and feed my soul
> With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure,
> Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!"

While most of Thomson's work, as has been said, was achieved in England, amidst scenes no less romantic, his heart was ever going back to the old home-haunts—to Tweedside, "whose pastoral banks first heard my Doric reed"; to the "sylvan Jed," and the "Braes of Soudan" (the local pronunciation of Southdean), and the "rough skirts of stormy Ruberslaw"—and it is these and other memories which are constantly showing up in his winsome word-paintings. No poetry was truer to Nature. Artificialism is entirely absent from it. He pours forth his numbers so vigorously, yet so witchingly and harmoniously, as could only one who had been a rapt, devoted student of every phase of his subject. Next to the enjoyment of Nature herself must be acquaintanceship with those noble strains of Nature's great poet—"our earlier Wordsworth."

Memorials to the poet of "The Seasons" there are several. Westminster Abbey has enrolled him in its Poets' Corner. Within Richmond Church, where his dust reposes, a tablet records his virtues, and his haunts around Kew Lane preserve many memories of the bard. At Dryburgh, the Earl of Buchan set up by the Tweed a Temple of the Muses. A fine window in Southdean Church commemorates his genius, and the gravestone of his father has been restored in perennial brass. On the Ferney Hill, near his birthplace, the Ednam Club erected in 1820 a substantial obelisk, 52 feet in height, bearing the inscription:

> "In memory of JAMES THOMSON, author of 'The Seasons,'
> born at Ednam 11th September, A.D. 1700."

Lord Buchan was originator of the Club, which met for the first time in 1791, on the anniversary of the poet's birth, and continued its meetings until 1819. A miniature of the poet, from the portrait by Slaughter, was presented to the Club by his lordship, and is now kept in the manse.

For the gathering of 1791 the Earl solicited the presence of Robert Burns, and hinted that an ode from him would be expected for the occasion. But Burns was in the middle of his harvest at Ellisland, and could not spare the time. He sent, however, the well-known "Address to the Shade of Thomson," full of tender touches and a loving sympathy:

> "So long, sweet Poet of the Year,
> Shall bloom that wreath thou well hast won;
> While Scotia, with exulting tear,
> Proclaims that Thomson was her son."

Within a twelvemonth he had composed a second set of verses in a very different strain, derogatory to the noble lord whose self-adulation seems to have been an unmistakable feature of the festival. See Henley and Henderson's *Burns*, ii, 227.

Notwithstanding the Earl of Buchan's eccentricities the practical interest he took in Thomson is one of the commendable acts of his career. It was mainly through his efforts that appreciation of the poet grew to an intensity, which cooled somewhat about the middle of the century, but was rekindled at its close with fresh vigour and enthusiasm, as seen in the demonstrations of 1900 both at Ednam and Southdean.*

Before taking leave of Ednam, two points of interest may be noted. One is the statement (there is good evidence for it) that when Thomson's father was minister of the parish the grandparents of Captain Cook were amongst his hearers, and that John Cuke, great-grandfather of the navigator, was an elder in 1692. The other is the birth, at Ednam West Mains, in 1793, of Henry Francis Lyte, writer of the hymns, "Abide with me, fast falls the eventide," "Sweet is the solemn voice that calls," "Pleasant are Thy courts above," "Jesus, I my cross have taken," and many others beautiful and ennobling. Lyte was Rector of Brixham on the shores of Torbay. He died at Nice in 1847.

* It may be recalled that Sir Walter Scott engaged to write a Life of Thomson "from some original materials," but the work, unfortunately, was never accomplished.—See Lockhart, vol. iii.

THE THOMSON MINIATURE

JAMES BALLANTYNE

From the Portrait at Abbotsford

(Reproduced by permission from Messrs. Jack's edition of Lockhart's "Life of Scott")

CHAPTER IV

THE GYPSY CAPITAL

IN old centuries the Scottish Border was seldom without the presence of royalty at one or other of its great castles. David I. and the Alexanders loved to sojourn by Tweed and Jed, and the Jameses and Queen Mary had a warm side to the Border homes. After their day the Border country still retained pretensions to royal favour, and could boast of a monarch and a royal residence, though the monarch was only a gypsy, the residence a two-roomed dwelling. The story of gypsy settlement on the Borders has its own interesting features, and in a study of the Scott Country it can hardly be omitted. Sir Walter came into frequent touch with members of the tribe. As a youth he was familiar with their camp-fires and their predatory perambulations, and in later life, as laird and Shirra, they came more immediately under his notice. It would have been strange, therefore, to find this peculiar people absent from his pages. In "Quentin Durward" he gives some account of the French gypsies in Louis XI.'s time, and there are many references throughout the novels to gypsy customs and character. But "Guy Mannering" is the great masterpiece of gypsy fiction, and its heroine, as Ruskin has styled "Meg Merrilies," with loyal heart and fiery natural eloquence, is the "most romantic among Scott's many weird women."

Yetholm, long famous as headquarters of the Scottish gypsies, lies among the Roxburghshire uplands, in the beautiful Vale of the Bowmont, not far from the Border line. From Kelso the road winds in a gradual ascent for some seven miles amid quiet, picturesque scenery common to the Lowlands. On the way we pass Blakelaw, birthplace of Thomas Pringle, one of the founders and first editors of *Blackwood's Magazine*, a philanthropist and poet whose "Autumnal Excursion" and "African Sketches" are still remembered. One of the most touching Border lyrics is Pringle's "Emigrant's Farewell," beginning :

" Our native land—our native vale—
A long and last adieu !
Farewell to bonnie Teviotdale,
And Cheviot mountains blue."

Born in 1789, he died at London in 1834. The twin villages of Town and Kirk Yetholm, on opposite sides of the Bowmont Water, creep close up under the shadow of the Cheviots. How delightful the old-world air that seems to hover around the place, as, quietly turning its back upon the morning sun, it sleeps in the midst of the green fells, far removed from the fretful toil and grind of modern life, a cosy little world of its own, hid well in Nature's lap, full of pastoral peace and felicity ! There is no particular history about Yetholm, but from its proximity to England raid and foray were no doubt frequent. From Flodden Field, a few miles distant, numbers of the slain were buried in the village churchyard, the nearest consecrated ground in Scotland. The chief claim of the place to recognition is the charming character of its situation and its romantic associations as the capital of Scottish Gypsydom. On its village green is a monument to Major-General A. G. Wauchope of Lochtower and Niddrie, who fell at Magersfontein.

But long before it was " discovered " as a country of pure bracing airs, and an ideal spot in which to dream away an idle holiday, it had been the abode of a people who loved the solitudes, and for whom Yetholm had become, like Jerusalem of old to the Jew, the royal city, a place of defence amongst the mountains. Who and whence are the gypsies is a problem for which there does not seem to be a satisfactory solution. They have been the subject of much speculation and many theories, yet nobody knows definitely about them. For a long time the prevailing idea was that they were an ancient race of people from Egypt. That great student of prophecy, Dr. Keith, looked upon them as an evidence of the fulfilment of Ezekiel's words, " I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries." The Scottish gypsies greatly strengthened this opinion by styling themselves " Lords and Erles of Litell Egypt," assuming this title on account of the common belief, and in order to give themselves importance in the eyes of the people and of the magistracy. That they represent no less than the Lost Ten

Tribes is a belief cherished by some even among themselves. With the Jew they have several things in common, and the complexional resemblances are striking—black hair, dark eyebrows, keen, penetrating eyes, and swarthy, olive colour. They have been conjectured also as of Indian extraction, descendants of a low caste of natives driven out of their country at the Tamerlane (Timur Beg) conquest in 1408, but well-established facts disprove this latter theory. Easterns they certainly are, with touches distinctly Oriental, and a patois akin to the New Indian dialects of the Panjab, but their real origin remains undiscovered.

It was not until the beginning of the sixteenth century that they arrived in Scotland. With aristocratic and high-sounding names they appeared upon the scene, and for a time won their way to royal regard and protection. Their style of living, picturesque appearance, splendid physical qualities, talent for music, and apparent wealth, all combined to gain for them the goodwill of the people. James IV. commended their chief, Anthonius Gawino, to the King of Denmark. In 1530 "they dansit before James V. in Halyrudhous." Queen Mary, doubtless from her foreign likings, looked kindly upon them. But under James VI. they fell upon evil times. In his reign, ranked as rogues and vagabonds, they were subjected to the severest penalties. Scores of them perished on the gallows, the galley-ship, and by drowning. During the foreign wars and the incessant clan-feuds at home many sought military service, and found favour as fearless and chivalrous fighters, and from an act of heroism performed by a soldier-gypsy, at the siege of Namur in 1695, to Captain David Bennet, the Laird of Kirk Yetholm, they are said to have been allowed to settle on his Yetholm estate, which continued their chief centre.

The commonest gypsy names are those of Baillie, Blythe, Douglas, Geddes, Gordon, Kennedy, Marshall, Rutherford, Ruthven, Shaw, Tait, Winter, and Young. The royal family were the Faas, who claimed descent from the Pharaohs, declaring that Faa was only a corruption of the name. The Faas figure not infrequently in Scottish history, and were connected by marriage with several noble Scottish houses. One of their number represented the Jedburgh Burghs in Parliament from 1734 to 1741, and others held various responsible positions. It was a Faa, Sir

John of Dunbar, who was the hero of the ballad "The Gypsy Laddie"—the real lover of Lady Jean Hamilton, daughter of the first Earl of Haddington, and wife of the sixth Earl of Cassilis. The story of their elopement and its tragic dénouement is well known. A more notable member of the family was Jean Gordon, the prototype of "Meg Merrilies," born at Yetholm about 1670. Jean is probably the best known of the gypsy tribe. The Introduction and Notes to "Guy Mannering" furnish some interesting particulars of her career. A remarkable-looking figure, nearly six feet in height, and a perfect Amazon in strength, many anecdotes have been related of her. She is said to have traced, like a very bloodhound, the murderer of her husband to Holland, thence back to Ireland, where she had him seized and taken to Scotland to meet his doom on the gallows-hill at Jedburgh. "Well, Jean, ye have got Rob Johnstone hanged at last and out o' the way," some one said to her shortly afterwards. "Aye, gudeman," replied Jean, lifting up her apron by the two corners, "and a' that fu' o' gowd hasna dune it."

Jean's death occurred at Carlisle in 1764 under circumstances of shocking barbarity. She was an ardent Jacobite, and roused the wrath of a strong anti-Stuart rabble in that town to such a pitch that they ducked her to death in the river Eden. "It was an operation of some time," says Scott, "for Jean was a stout woman, and struggled hard with her murderers, often got her head above water, and, while she had voice left, continued to exclaim at such intervals, 'Charlie yet! Charlie yet!' When a child and among the scenes which she frequented, I often heard these stories, and cried piteously for poor Jean Gordon." "My memory is haunted," he adds, "with a solemn remembrance of a woman of more than female height, dressed in a long red cloak, who commenced acquaintance by giving me an apple, but whom, nevertheless, I looked upon with much awe. I conceive this woman to have been Madge Gordon"—Jean's granddaughter, the recognised Queen of the Yetholm clans in Scott's day, who is said to have sat as the representative of the *person* of "Meg Merrilies," if Jean Gordon was the prototype of her *character*.

Within recent times some outstanding Sovereigns have occupied the Yetholm throne. There was old Wull Faa II, sportsman and smuggler, though "no dark Jeddart prison e'er

CHARLES II, THE LAST GYPSY KING
(Died May, 1902)

THE GYPSY PALACE

closed upon him "—a universal favourite—who died in 1847, at the age of ninety-six. After him came his nephew, King Charles I., who reigned fourteen years—somewhat of a student, stocked with Border lore, on friendly terms with Scott, who encouraged him to camp about Abbotsford. Esther, his daughter, was Queen 1861–1883; and, after a lengthened interregnum, her son as Charles II. wore the royal scarlet. The King (d. 1902) was a hale old man of over seventy, with a fine, intelligent gypsy face, and —an important point—strictly upright in all his ways. He began life as a farm-servant, but took to hawking. After travelling the country for thirty-five years he settled down in Kirk Yetholm. His abode was, of course, the Palace, a neat, comfortable-looking cottage on the village green. Great ceremonies attended his accession in 1898. Vast throngs flocked to Yetholm, with no inconsiderable gathering of his own followers and the usual gypsy retinue, caravans and asses galore. The whole affair was a clever, if ludicrous, aping of a coronation at Westminster. The "hereditary Archbishop of Yetholm" placed the crown—a brass one studded with big imitation jewels—on His Majesty's head with these words: "I hereby crown Charles Faa Blythe as King of Yetholm Gypsies wherever they are, challenge who dare, and I summon all his loyal people to do him respect and homage. Long live the King!" Then the "Chancellor" said he was commanded by His Majesty to thank his subjects for the honour conferred upon him, and to say that it would be his earnest endeavour to rule his people wisely and well, and he trusted that his loyal subjects in the regal villages of Kirk and Town Yetholm would live in peace and prosperity under his sway. The occasion was unique, and is not likely to occur again, for Scottish gypsydom is doomed. Their occupation as horners, muggers, and tinklers, as besom and basket makers, is almost gone. Police Acts prevent them from squatting on their former favourite haunts. Driven from the highway to the house, and from the house to field and factory, they are gradually "losing caste" and becoming absorbed in the common population of the country.

CHAPTER V

"EDEN SCENES ON CRYSTAL JED"

THE line which gives title to this chapter is from Burns's "Epistle to Creech," written at Selkirk:

> "Up wimpling, stately Tweed I've sped,
> And Eden scenes on crystal Jed,"

and very happily describes the scenery of the district. No visitor to Jedburgh should miss making the half-dozen or so miles' drive or walk up the lovely vale of the Jed. When last we passed through its sylvan shades, the first flushes of autumn were beginning to appear, and the glory of a September sun reflecting itself on the red scaurs of the river and the glorious woodlands overhead, with the ceaseless windings of the stream clad from bank to bank in the choicest of colours, turned the picture into one never to be forgotten. It was in the summer of 1787 when Burns made his journey up the Jed, and his fine phrase—none too flattering—was doubtless the summing-up of a similar experience. It has been affirmed that in the few miles of Jed water above the town there are to be found more of the elements of fine landscape than during a whole day's ride in the most favourite Scottish haunts. The rockiness of the river's bed, the briskness of its current, the pureness of its waters, the endless combinations of slope and precipice, of haugh and hillock, of verdure and escarpment, of copse and crag, produce many a scene of picturesqueness and romance. History sheds its glamour over it, and the best native poetry, in Burns, Scott, Thomson, Leyden, and others, has voiced its charms. Here are the Capon Tree and the King of the Wood—immemorial oaks, the last relics of "Jedworth's forest wild and free." Hard by is Ferniherst of the "cappit Kers," Wardens of the Middle Marches:

> "Old Ferniherst, whose battled keep
> Still towers embosomed in the woods,"

and, from a recent restoration, likely to continue towering. It

is long since the days of Dacre and the redoubtable " Dand " Ker. What desperate fighting has there been by this sturdy old stronghold ! And how profound and soothing Nature's solitude around it to-day ! All sorts of memories live by Jed stream. The Hundalee caves recall the Gadeni, the primitive inhabitants of the valley. Camp traces are frequent. The crumbling peel-house looks out from many a knowe. At Lintalee, where are the remains of an extensive camp, the " good Sir James Douglas," Bruce's captain, inflicted signal defeat on the English shortly after Bannockburn. Here and there we meet with associations of Kirk and Covenant. Some four miles up the river is the site of one of the original Jedworths, still retaining the name of Old Jedburgh, a few grassy mounds marking the spot.

The charm of Jedburgh consists in an old-world character that clings to it, and in the almost Continental traces which it exhibits. It reminds one in some aspects of an English cathedral town ; and there are not wanting resemblances to the capital of Scotland. With a thousand memories of the past clustering about it, Jedburgh is perhaps the most historic place in the Scottish Lowlands. Bishop Ecgred of Lindisfarne, its ninth-century founder, could not have chosen a cosier corner in which to rear his sanctuary and the little township that grew up beside it. Nestling in the quiet valley, and creeping up the ridge of the Dunion, the song of the river ever in its ear, freshened by the scent of garden and orchard, and surrounded by finely-wooded heights, Nature has been lavish in filling with new adornments, as years sped on, a spot always bright and fair—

> " O softly, Jed ! thy sylvan current lead
> Round every hazel copse and smiling mead,
> Where lines of firs the glowing landscape screen,
> And crown the heights with tufts of deeper green."

Notwithstanding the modern beauty and peace of the place, Jedburgh's history has been troubled and chequered. It was a frontier town, the first place of importance north of the Cheviots, within ten miles of the Border, and almost from the first a scene of strife and bloodshed. Around it lay the famous Jed Forest, rivalling that of Ettrick. From an early period it was a favourite rendezvous of the Scottish armies in frequent onslaughts against their " auld enemies " of England. At the kirk of Southdean the

chiefs under the doughty Douglas assembled for the fight at Otterburn. The men of Jedburgh were conspicuous for bravery in the bitter struggles during the period of Scotland's "making." They were to be found in every encounter, striking terror to the heart of every antagonist by their wild, piercing slogan—"Jethart's here"—and their dexterous, death-dealing handling of the Jethart axe, or staff—their own invention—a stout steel-headed pole four feet long, the use of which more than once turned the tide of battle. But Jethart men had to face disaster as well as success. Even their good broadswords and ponderous axes failed them under the overmastering might of numbers. Not once nor twice in Jedburgh's story has the town, both in castle and abbey, falling a prey to the invader, become a mass of smouldering ruins. In 1410 it was burned and pillaged by the English, and again in 1464 and 1523, and, worst of all, in 1544 and 1545, when Evers and Hertford wrought devastation through all the Border. But they kept up the fighting temper, and proved their prowess. At almost the last of the long line of clan-fights—that known as the Raid of the Reidswire (a pass of the Cheviots on Carter Fell), in 1575, celebrated in one of the most spirited of the Border ballads, it was Jethart men, headed by their Provost, coming up in the nick of time, who saved the day for the Scots. And at Flodden we know how the sons of the Forest, both of Jed and Ettrick, bore the brunt of battle, and were "a' wede away" on that darkest of dark fields.

Perhaps it was natural in those old fighting days for statements to be made which had no foundation in fact. One was that the Jedburghers were a blood-thirsty and cruel set, with no sense of justice or fair play; that they punished first and then pronounced sentence. Hence arose the phrase "Jethart justice," like the Devonshire "Lydford Law"—

> "How in the morn they hang and draw,
> And sit in judgment after."

In a kind of opprobrious fashion the phrase has been fastened about the necks of the good folks of Jedburgh, who are in no way responsible for it. It arose three centuries ago, through the summary execution of a band of Border marauders at the instance of Sir George Home, first Earl of Dunbar, a nobleman of note in James VI.'s reign.

The most imposing object about Jedburgh is its Abbey, bearing still upon it in choir and tower traces of the enemy's fire. Completer than Kelso and Dryburgh, and simpler and more harmonious than Melrose, it stands in the most delightful of situations, girt about with well-kept gardens, overlooking the bosky banks of the Jed—a veritable poem in Nature and Art. It is this which gives the ruin half its grandeur. More than likely the Abbey of Jedburgh occupies the site of Ecgred's fane, built about the middle of the ninth century. For 300 years at least, a little settlement of devout men would be centred here, gradually bringing the countryside under the benign, civilizing influence of Christianity. They lived and did their good work, then passed away, and to their successors of the twelfth century—men thrilled with the same spirit—a new, joyous epoch came, when the royal master himself, David, the "sair sanct," sought out their sweet nook, and planted the first of his great Border abbeys. There is probably no other country district that can boast of having within so small a compass so grand a group of ecclesiastical buildings as those which lie, all within a few miles of each other, by the banks of the Tweed and Jed. Here were established in the first half of the twelfth century, and within a period of thirty years, four great religious houses by the same founder, which were destroyed at the same time by the same ruthless hands four centuries afterwards, and now stand in ruin equally desolate and equally interesting. The oldest is that of Jedburgh, founded as a priory about 1118, and raised to the dignity of a monastery towards the end of David's reign. Endowed with vast wealth, and dedicated to the Virgin, it was tenanted by a colony of Augustinian friars from St. Quentin's Abbey, at Beauvais, in France. The edifice which now rears its head in ruined glory—"the pride of Teviotdale"—is supposed to have been completed within eighty years from its foundation, and there was being constantly added to it large gifts of property in churches, lands, and money. Within its walls many notable functions were celebrated, chief among them being the second marriage, in 1285, of Alexander III., the last of the Celtic line of Kings, to Joleta, daughter of the French Count de Dreux. The weird tradition of the nuptial merrymaking is known to most, how the hilarity of the occasion was rudely quenched by the appearance of a spectral form,

described as resembling Death, gliding in and out amongst the dancers, and as suddenly vanishing whilst the company were gazing upon it in consternation. It must be remembered that the last years of the thirteenth century were rife with superstition. It was the period of Thomas the Rhymer and Michael Scot, and of universal belief in the " black art." And the dance was probably only a part of a new pageant prearranged by some clever trickster for the royal revels—the pageant, it may have been, of the Dance of Death, familiar enough in the late Middle Ages, though unknown in Scotland up to that time. The new union of Alexander was regarded with some apprehension, and the national outlook being of the gloomiest character, it was given out that Death himself had appeared to warn the King and the people of his impending doom. When, therefore, only a few months later, the blow fell in the tragedy at Kinghorn, and the little Norway Maid remained the sole hope of Scotland, the story of the ghost that danced at Jedburgh was more firmly believed than ever, and passed into the page of history as an incident of the supernatural with a very real and terrible meaning. At the height of its power and fame Jedburgh Abbey must have presented a striking appearance. Even yet in ruin no other building in the country has quite the same quiet and lofty air of dignity. Frequently battered and burned, it shows four different periods of restoration. The style is principally Norman and Early Decorated, and several unique features in door and window architecture are among the finest extant specimens of the art.

The Castle of Jedburgh stood at the town-head, where the rough hill-road begins its steep slope across the Dunion. Its site is now filled by the county prison, erected in 1823. It appears to have been a building of enormous strength, and was a favourite residence of the early Sovereigns. Passing through the usual vicissitudes of such strongholds, and often held by the English, it was destroyed in 1409 by the men of Teviotdale themselves, after a prolonged struggle, rather than allow it to be again usurped by the enemy.

An interesting little interlude in the story of Jedburgh, which might have been fraught with momentous national issues, occurred in 1566, when Queen Mary and a considerable retinue visited the town. Her errand was to restore order on the Borders,

whose lawlessness had increased beyond all bounds. She held an assize for a week, and at its close set out in hot haste by way of Hawick, for Hermitage Castle, amongst the Liddesdale wilds, where the Earl of Bothwell, her lover and lieutenant, lay sick and wounded from a sword-thrust by the famous freebooter, "little Jock Elliot." The Queen returned to Jedburgh that same night, after riding close on fifty miles across the hard bridle-paths of the hills, and over many a soft, slippery track by moor and fenside. At one place her palfrey is said to have stumbled into a morass—still called the Queen's Mire—and was extricated with difficulty. No wonder that the long, weary, perilous journey, the excitements of the day, and the trials that were beginning to close so thick and fast around her, should have told on her strength, and driven her into an almost mortal illness. For thirty days she lay in fevered weakness in the quaint, bastle-looking building in Queen Street, which bears her name.* This is one of the most historic houses in the locality, and, notwithstanding much recent improvement, has altered little since Mary's day. A large fruit-garden encircles it, extending down to the river. What was the Queen's room looks out on this garden, and there may still be seen on the wall a broad stretch of pictorial tapestry—the meeting of Jacob and Esau—believed to be the work of the royal maids during that memorable visit. The bed which the Queen occupied was presented to Sir Walter Scott, and forms the carved panelling of "Speak-a-bit" at Abbotsford. When the dark and troubled days gathered round the unfortunate Queen, and Fotheringay was not far distant, she is said to have been often heard exclaiming in the anguish of a broken spirit: "Would that I had died at Jedburgh!" Better, indeed, had the end come then.

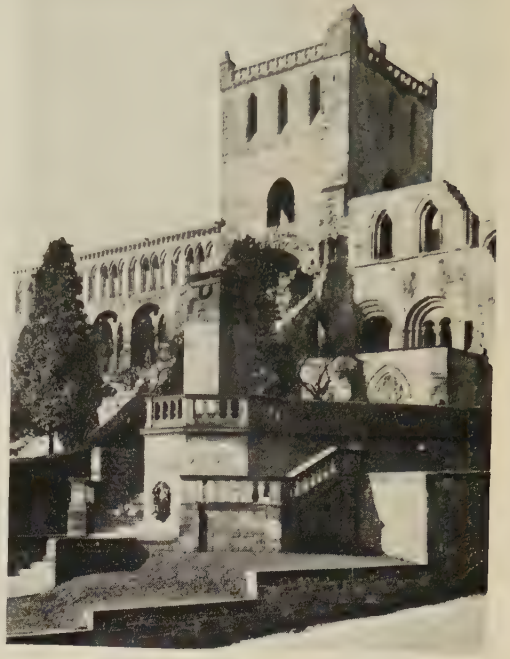
The literary associations of Jedburgh, and its connection with Sir Walter Scott, are of outstanding interest. Scott bore a deep affection for the old burgh, and was a frequent visitor. His uncle, Thomas Scott, lived at Monklaw, in the neighbourhood, and other attractions drew him to the district. At the Circuit Court in 1793 he made his first appearance as criminal counsel,

* Now the property of the Burgh of Jedburgh. Many interesting relics have been collected together here, including a tiny watch, of French make, believed to have been lost by the Queen during the Hermitage adventure.

pleading successfully for his client, a noted poacher and sheep-stealer. "You're a lucky scoundrel," Scott whispered to him when the verdict had been given. "I'm just o' your mind," was the reply, "and I'll send you a maukin (a hare) the morn, man." One of Scott's associates was the Sheriff-Substitute of the Shire, Robert Shortreed, in whose company the Liddesdale "raids" were made. Shortreed was a man after Scott's own heart, full of the Border spirit, and, from his wide acquaintance, of greatest service in the ballad-hunting business. Many a long ride among the hills they had together. "He was," says Scott, "a merry companion, a good singer and mimic, and full of Scottish drollery. In his company and under his guidance I was able to see much of rural society in the mountains, which I could not otherwise have obtained, and which I have made my use of. He was in addition a man of worth and character." With Scott for cicerone, the Wordsworths visited Jedburgh in September 1803, lodging at No. 5, Abbey Close. A tablet records the occasion. In the "Matron of Jedburgh," the Lake poet paid a kindly tribute to the "character and domestic situation" of his hostess. The party walked up the Jed as far as Ferniherst, and in the evening Scott read from the unpublished manuscript of the "Lay."

James Veitch, self-taught natural philosopher, was another of Scott's intimates. In his study at Inchbonny, close to the famous Huttonian Section, which marks the difference between the Silurian and the Old Red Sandstone, he was visited by the leading scientific men of the day. "When are you coming amongst us in Edinburgh to take your place with our philosophers?" Scott used to say to him, and the reply would be: "I will think of that, Sir Walter, when you become a Lord of Session." Sir David Brewster, born at Jedburgh in 1781, son of the Rector of the Grammar School, spent much of his boyhood in Veitch's workshop, and no doubt then laid the foundation of his future career. Jedburgh added another eminent name to the world of science and letters in the gifted Mary Somerville, whose uncle and father-in-law, Dr. Somerville, the historian of Queen Anne's reign, was parish minister for fifty-seven years. Dr. Macknight, the commentator, was also incumbent at Jedburgh, and the younger Thomas Boston, one of the Relief founders,

QUEEN MARY'S HOUSE, JEDBURGH
(From a Painting by W. Riddell Mabon)
Now the property of the Burgh of Jedburgh



Walter Easton, Jr.
JEDBURGH ABBEY AND WAR MEMORIAL

ministered in the town for a time. Thomas Davidson, the "Scottish Probationer," asleep on the sunny slope of Castlewood Cemetery, has an assured place in all hearts. Few, in a brief lifetime, were more lovable or more lamented. Born at Oxnam Row in 1838, he died at Bankend in 1870. Jedburgh's historians, Alexander Jeffrey and James Watson, must be mentioned, and Lord Chancellor Campbell, whose grave is in the south aisle of the abbey. At No. 9, Castlegate, Prince Charlie lodged on his way South after Prestonpans. Burns "put up" at No. 27, Canongate (see tablet) received the freedom of the burgh, fell in love with "sweet Isabella Lindsay," and left the town with the parting words: "Jed, pure be thy crystal streams, and hallowed thy sylvan banks!" Of Scott and Jedburgh there is one other memory—a painful one, but much exaggerated by Lockhart, and concerning which Scott himself seems to have been largely in error. He paid two political visits to the place during the Reform agitation of 1831, made speeches, and was somewhat unceremoniously treated by the rabble. Lockhart's highly-coloured account of the second occasion hardly tallies with the statement of those who were eye-witnesses; nor is it consistent with the probabilities of the case. The likelihood is that both Scott and his biographer pictured the scene from the side of hot political prejudice. They were Tories of an uncompromising type, whilst the majority of the men of Jedburgh and Hawick were doggedly democratic. All the same, that Scott, shattered in health, should have put himself in harm's way was manifestly a mistake on his part, and any abusive word or deed from the people of a town and district he so well loved is one of those regrettable incidents impossible now to recall, but for which Time has brought the softening and healing touches, and the atonement that a modern age has made.

Jedburgh forms a convenient centre from which to visit many spots of more than local interest. Crailing, in the immediate neighbourhood, was the scene of the ministry of David Calderwood, the Kirk historian. At Nisbet, in the same parish, the saintly Samuel Rutherford was born about the year 1600. Penielheugh is an ever-present memory, whose minaret-looking structure, 156 feet in height, reared on an elevation of nearly 800 feet, commemorates the victories of Wellington and the

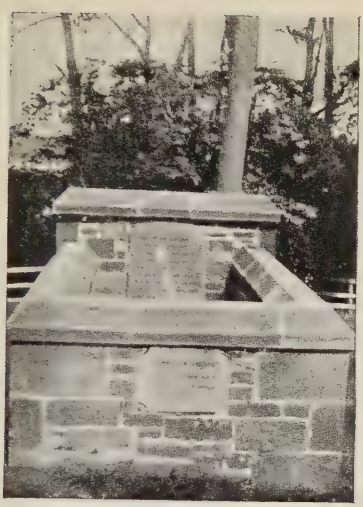
British Army. On the southern base of the hill lies Mounteviot, where died in 1805 Jean Elliot, writer of the version of the "Flowers of the Forest" beginning:

> "I've heard a lilting at the ewe-milking,
> Lasses a-lilting before dawn of day."

Right over against Penielheugh, to the south-west, embowered in woods, is Ancrum, a village of considerable antiquity, long held by the See of Glasgow. Its Cross, as old as the time of David I., is one of the best-preserved of the crosses on the Border. Ancrum was the birthplace of Dr. William Buchan, of "Domestic Medicine" celebrity; and it has been stated, though there does not seem definite proof for it, that "Douglas" Home was born here. James Thomson spent some time at the manse of Ancrum, and a cave in the glen of the Ale Water bears his name. "Worthy famous Mr. John Livingstone," as he was called by his contemporaries, a notable Covenanting divine, was minister of this parish from 1648 to 1662. Ancrum naturally suggests Ancrum Moor, a mile or two north-west of the village, one of the last great battle-fields of the international war. In February, 1544, an English army under Sir Ralph Evers and Sir Brian Latoun desolated the Scottish frontier as far north as Melrose, defacing the Douglas tombs in the abbey. On returning with their booty towards Jedburgh, they were overtaken at Ancrum Moor, and severely beaten by a Scottish force led by the Earl of Angus and Scott of Buccleuch. In this battle, according to tradition, fought Maiden Lilliard, a brave Scotswoman from Maxton, who fell beneath many wounds, and was buried on the spot, thenceforward known as Lilliard's Edge.* Her grave, in the midst of a thick fir-wood, will be best understood from the illustration. The inscription upon it reads:

> "Fair Maiden Lilliard
> Lies under this stane;
> Little was her stature,
> But muckle was her fame.

* Lilliard, however, or a form of the word—Liliatte, Liliot Lyllyat—seems to have been the name of the *place*. "Liliot Cross" is mentioned in early documents as a meeting-place of the English and Scottish Commissioners for the settlement of Border affairs. There can be no doubt that the old "Liliot" is to be identified with the modern Lilliard. So that, if there is any truth in the story, it should probably read the "Fair Maid *of* Lilliard."



MAIDEN LILLIARD'S GRAVE

PENIELHEUGH

Upon the English loons
She laid monie thumps,
An' when her legs were cuttit off
She fought upon her stumps."

The monument has been frequently restored. Lady John Scott (authoress of the song "Annie Laurie") made the last repairing touches, and added the words:

"To a' true Scotsmen.
By me it's been mendit:
To your care I commend it."

From the highway, close by, on the watershed between Tweed and Teviot, some fine views are obtainable. Looking out on the broad panorama from the massive Mauseoleum at the western end of the ridge, Thomas Davidson "made this speech for the tenant of it"—General Sir Thomas Monteath Douglas of Stonebyres, Lanarkshire, who died October 18, 1868:

"And there will I be Buried.

"Tell me not the good and wise
Care not where their dust reposes—
That to him in death who lies
Rocky beds are even as roses.

"I've been happy above ground;
I can ne'er be happy under
Out of gentle Teviot's sound—
Part us not, then, far asunder.

"Lay me here where I may see
Teviot round his meadows flowing,
And around and over me
Winds and clouds for ever going."

CHAPTER VI

THE LAND OF LEYDEN

WALTER SCOTT and John Leyden met for the first time in the winter of 1800–1. They were introduced to each other by Richard Heber, the bibliomaniac. Heber was making a literary sojourn in Scotland, and became acquainted with Leyden as an almost daily visitor to Archibald Constable's bookshop, the great rendezvous of the Edinburgh literati. Dr. Anderson, of the "British Poets," was the link of communion between them. When Scott heard from Heber of the "discovery" of John Leyden and his wide knowledge of Border lore and affection for the Borders, he at once identified the new acquaintance as a contributor to the *Edinburgh Magazine* who designated himself "J. L. Banks of the Teviot." A number of poetical pieces over this signature had caught Scott's eye, and set him wondering as to their author. That the unknown "J. L." should become one of his dearest friends, his closest associate in the preparation of the "Minstrelsy," and have his Memoir written by Scott, was an undreamt-of literary development. Yet few worthier names have been woven into the life-story of Sir Walter, or have distincter claims to personal recognition. Leyden's career is the most stimulating in Border biography. Within the brief compass of six-and-thirty years he blossomed into one of the profoundest scholars of the day, in linguistic learning outshining all others, and had before him the promise of much wider usefulness and renown, when suddenly,

> "Quenched was his lamp of varied lore
> That loved the light of song to pour."

The "land of Leyden" is not so well known as it might be. It is a singularly attractive part of the Scott Country, and, though lying a little off the beaten track, can be visited with comparative ease. The student of Scott cannot afford to neglect it.

Like many notable scholars and singers, John Leyden

LEYDEN'S BIRTHPLACE

SITE OF HENLAWSHIEL AND RUBERSLAW

sprang from humble rank. The eldest child of a Teviotdale shepherd, his "bright and brief career" began its busy round at Denholm, a pretty little village on the Teviot, five miles equidistant between Jedburgh and Hawick. The date of his birth was September 8, 1775. About Denholm there is nothing specially inviting from a historical point of view. The place is a model of a country village, clean as the proverbial new pin, the chief part ranging itself in the form of a square round a well-kept green. But Denholm is the centre of a region brimful of romance, and whose natural features are among the finest in the Border country. Cavers, in which parish lies mostly all the land of Leyden, is a name to conjure with in Border story. From the fourteenth century it has been the home of the Douglases,

> "Lords of the Border! where their pennons flew
> Mere mortal might could ne'er their arms subdue;
> Their sword, the scythe of ruin, mowed a host,
> Nor Death a triumph o'er the line could boast."

In the mansion of Cavers were preserved the pennon borne before the great Earl at Otterburn, and the gauntlets taken from the proud Percy. These are now in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries at Edinburgh. The once important town of Cavers has vanished, only a bit of its ancient Cross remaining; but close by stands the pre-Reformation kirk in which Boston often preached, and where Thomas Chalmers was for a time an assistant. This is the building associated with many of Leyden's pranks during his residence in the district; and in the surrounding churchyard are the graves of his parents and other members of the family. "Denholm's mazy Dene" is within a short distance,—a deep densely-wooded glen through which the Dene Burn brattles merrily over its rocky channel, broken up here and there into tiny cascades, hid often under the overhanging greenery—the coolest, shadiest, most charming retreat imaginable. Here Leyden courted the solitude and the company of Nature in her most genial moods. Much of his summer vacation was spent in the student's bower he erected in the Dene, and the tree-stump where he sat is pointed out. Within a mile or two is Minto, rich in memories of its illustrious House and the large place the Elliots have held in the history of the Empire. Here were

born, in 1727, Jean Elliot, authoress of the version of the "Flowers of the Forest" referred to in the previous chapter; and, a few years earlier, her brother, Sir Gilbert, statesman and scholar, possessed also of some lyrical talent, one of whose compositions, "My Sheep I neglected," is described by Scott as "a beautiful pastoral song," and quoted in the Notes to Canto I. of the "Lay." Others of the family attained eminence in various public capacities. The son of Sir Gilbert, first Earl of Minto, and Governor-General of India, was Leyden's close friend in that country. At Minto House Thomas Campbell composed "Lochiel's Warning." Sir Walter Scott was a frequent visitor. His Journal of December 23, 1825, records a curious superstition regarding the death of the first Earl. By Minto Crags, crowned with Fatlips Castle and Barnhill's Bed—picturesque landmarks—Scott brings Deloraine on his uncanny midnight mission.

Hassendean, or Hazeldean, lies in the near neighbourhood, recalling Sir Walter's "Jock of Hazeldean," and Leyden's lines on the old kirk and kirkyard, destroyed by an ice-flood in 1796:

> "Where slept my fathers in their natal clay
> Till Teviot's waters roll'd their bones away."

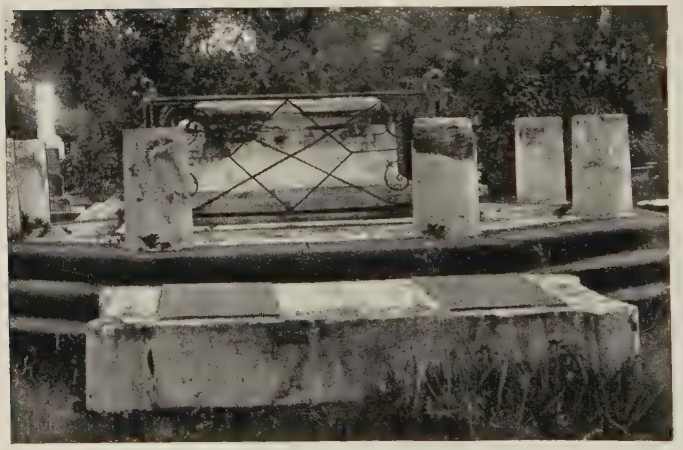
As Scott at Sandyknowe was nursed in the arms of Romance, so Leyden came under the like influence at Denholm and Cavers. It was natural, therefore, that he should develop a strong attachment to Border history and a deepening love for Border literature. The Borders made him a poet. His own inherent genius drew the scholar out of him. When he was a year old his parents removed to Henlawshiel, on his grand-uncle's farm of Nether Tofts, a lonely cottage, now extinct, under the shadow of Ruberslaw. Here his boyhood was spent, and the rudiments of his education received at the parish school of Kirkton, two miles distant, on the site of what is now called Athole Cottage. Towering and majestic, its grey summit often chafed with storms, its far-sloping sides swathed in whins and heather, Ruberslaw breathed into his expanding mind feelings of awe and wonder. Ruberslaw in storm is said to have suggested, at an earlier period, to the bard of "The Seasons" his poem on "Winter." At Henlawshiel Leyden laid the foundation of that chivalrous independence, that unswerving resoluteness, which were outstanding features in his career. There, too, he became imbued

with those sentiments of piety born of the simplicity of life and reverence for Divine things that prevailed in his father's household. Amid the same influences there sprang up early in his mind a strong thirst for legend and story. This craving was fostered by his mother, a woman of singular intelligence, and possessed of a rich fund of traditional lore. And should he have ascended the heath-clad hill above his father's house, he might call up to his vivid imagination the moss-trooper scouring the hills and glens far beneath him ; he might sit in the stony pulpit from which Peden and Welsh are said to have preached to the persecuted Covenanters, and picture to himself the congregation dispersing into Denholm Dene when the pitiless dragoons rushed on them. He could see the site of many a battlefield and Border foray ; and far towards the South he could trace the line which bounds, while it binds, the sister kingdom. Among scenes and associations such as these Leyden's youth was spent, varied by lessons from his aged grandmother, and occasional farm-work as it suited his boyish strength. Three years at Kirkton School, then he passed to the care of the Rev. James Duncan, a Cameronian minister in Denholm, and two years later he was sent to the University of Edinburgh to study for the Kirk of Scotland ministry. That is a beautiful and pathetic picture of Leyden's departure for college, the pious parent, proud of his son's accomplishments and promising future, convoying his boy for twenty miles on the way to the untried city, counselling him all the while, no doubt ; and the lad continuing the journey alone. Leyden owed much to his father, a man of strong mind and deep religious convictions. Professor Thomas Brown, one of the poet's intimates, used to say that in all his experience he had never met with any man who came so near his ideal of a Scottish peasant as old John Leyden. A student's life lay between the years 1790 and 1798, when he was licensed as a preacher. They were years of close, keen study. None wrought harder than the uncouth but amazingly clever student from the Borderland. His forte was classics. His ruling passion was to possess in a very real sense the gift of tongues. And he succeeded. No student in the University except his warm and constant friend Alexander Murray, by and by Professor of Oriental Languages, could equal him in linguistic science. At the end of his second

session Leyden taught a school at The Luggie of Clovenfords, where he formed a companionship with Nicol, the poet-preacher of Traquair, whom he often visited in his romantic parish. But his vacation months were usually spent at home, and at Nether Tofts. Nothing pleased old Andrew Blythe more than the coming of his young kinsman from the college; and one of the joys of Leyden's student life was to drink in, with keen relish, as Scott had done not long before, all that could be known of those weird, wild Border tales of which his mother and his mother's uncle had so vast a store. Many glimpses of the lighter phases are seen about this time. He was full of fun, an adept in innocent practical joking. The "raising of the deil" in Cavers Kirk is the great Leyden story of the district; and it is recorded that the first sermon he preached in the old building where he was wont to pursue his summer studies, was from the text, "Get thee behind me, Satan." But Leyden did not succeed as a preacher. He became, in fact, a "stickit minister," and, like others similarly unsuccessful, he drifted into literature. The next years were crowded with literary activity. From 1799 to 1802 he plied his genial tasks. He contributed to magazines and collections of poetry. Scott read his effusions, and, as we have seen, there grew up between them a firm bond of friendship. He was Scott's most valued coadjutor in the compilation of the "Minstrelsy," contributing several ballads of note. They "raided" the Border country together, rejoicing in the spoils gathered, and had Leyden not gone abroad there is no saying what other collaborations might have been effected. He assisted "Monk" Lewis in his "Tales of Wonder," and managed for a time the *Scots Magazine*, besides editing the "Complaynt of Scotland" * and a collection of "Scottish Descriptive Poems." Then he wrote on African discovery—it is said he wished to explore Central Africa himself; on the Ossian controversy; Fairy Superstitions; and his favourite theme of Philology. Sometimes he was a private tutor, and occasionally occupied a pulpit; and finally he became a full-blown surgeon, with a St. Andrews M.D. behind his name. In 1803 we find him taking

* It is a curious coincidence that the most recent editor of the "Complaynt" should also be a native of Denholm, and, like Leyden, eminent as a philologist, viz., Sir J. A. H. Murray (b. 1837, d. 1915), editor of "The New English Dictionary."

JOHN LEYDEN
From the portrait by Sir David Wilkie



GRAVE OF LEYDEN (*the flat stone in front*)

farewell of the Borders and sailing for India's coral strand. He accepted an appointment in the East India Company's service at Madras, a post which afforded him considerable scope for his Oriental studies. Soon we find him rising in rank and office as a Professor, a Judge, a Commissioner, and Assay-Master of the Calcutta Mint. In 1811 his services were required in the expedition against Java, the last of the French colonial possessions, and near the seaport city of Batavia his laborious life sadly and suddenly closed, while he was yet in his thirty-sixth year.

John Leyden will be best remembered as the poet of his native dale. As such he survives in the affection of all Borderers. Exquisitely tender and true to the setting is the "Scenes of Infancy." Pathetic that the author should pass away so soon after its publication! The poem is a description of his much-loved Teviotdale. He sings in witching numbers of its enchanting scenery and all the wealth of its romantic history. But it does not flow on consecutively, for he introduces his reader to remoter climes and stranger shores. While he muses in winsome verse of "Green Cavers, hallowed by the Douglas name," of "Dena's vale" and "Ancrum's groves," of the "rough skirts of stormy Ruberslaw" and the "green slopes of Minto's sun-bright hills," or "wood-girt Harden far above the vale," and "Bortha hoarse," and "Eildon's shivery side," he sings also of "Nile's redundant stream," and "Niger's banks," of "Ontario's side," and "Ohio's flood." From the crumbling fanes of Melrose and Dryburgh, and the ruined castle of Roxburgh, he takes flight to Gondar's palaces and the enchanted halls of the Caliph Vathek. Notwithstanding these wanderings, he is true to the Teviot and the Border homes.

Large portions of the poem were written at Lasswade Cottage, while the author was visiting Scott and arranging the ballads of the "Minstrelsy." No one was more welcome beneath Scott's roof, nor did two hearts beat in closer unity. Here is Leyden's appreciation of Scott:

> "O Scott! with whom in youth's serenest prime
> I wove, with careless hand, the fairy rhyme,
> Bade chivalry's barbaric pomp return,
> And heroes wake from every mouldering urn!
> Thy powerful verse, to grace the courtly hall,
> Shall many a tale of elder time recall,

The deeds of knights, the loves of dames proclaim,
And give forgotten bards their former fame.
Enough for me, if Fancy wake the spell
To Eastern minstrels' strains like thine to tell.
Till saddening Memory all our haunts restore,
The wild-wood walks by Esk's romantic shore,
The circled hearth, which ne'er was wont to fail
In cheerful joke and legendary tale;
Thy mind, whose fearless frankness naught could move,
Thy friendship, like an elder brother's love.
While from each scene of early life I part,
True to the beatings of this ardent heart,
When, half-deceased, with half the world between,
My name shall be unmentioned on the green,
When years combine with distance, let me be
By all forgot, remembered yet by thee!"

But Leyden's name is not likely to be forgotten. Few, indeed, have been more held in honour. In 1861 a handsome monument was inaugurated to the memory of her poet-son in the centre of "Denholm's lovely green." On its four sides are the inscriptions:

SOUTH SIDE.

"John Leyden, born at Denholm 8th September, 1775; died at Batavia 28th August, 1811."

NORTH SIDE.

"To the memory of the poet and Oriental scholar whose genius, learning, and manly virtues were an honour to his country, and shed a lustre on his native Teviotdale. This monument was erected by public subscription, A.D. 1861."

EAST SIDE.

"Dear native valleys! may ye long retain
The chartered freedom of the mountain swain;
Long 'mid your sounding glades, in union sweet
May rural innocence and beauty meet!
And still be duly heard at twilight calm
From every cot the peasant's chanted psalm!" *

WEST SIDE.

"His bright and brief career is o'er,
And mute his tuneful strains.
Quenched is his lamp of varied lore
That loved the light of song to pour;
A distant and a deadly shore
Has Leyden's cold remains." †

* "Scenes of Infancy," part iii. † "Lord of the Isles," canto iv.

In 1875 his centenary was celebrated by a brilliant gathering at Denholm; and in 1896 the Edinburgh Border Counties Association became proprietors of Leyden's Cottage, which is now open to visitors. An appropriate memorial marks the site of Henlawshiel. The bard sleeps far away from the "paternal grave," in distant Tanabang, by the Javan shore. Kindly hands raised a stone over his remains, and the grateful heart of Sir Stamford Raffles, the great Colonial Governor, Leyden's bosom friend, expressed itself in the words graven thereon :*

Sacred to the memory of
JOHN CASPER LEYDEN, M.D.,

who was born at Teviotdale, in Scotland, and who died, in the prime of life, at Molenvliet, near Batavia, on the 28th August, 1811, two days after the fall of Cornelis. The poetical talents and superior literary attainments of Dr. Leyden rendered him an ornament of the age in which he lived. His ardent spirit and insatiable thirst after knowledge was perhaps unequalled; and the friends of science must ever deplore his untimely fate. His principles as a man were pure and spotless, and as a friend he was firm and sincere. Few have passed through this life with fewer vices, or with a greater prospect of happiness in the next."

* For interesting particulars of Leyden's Indian career, see Boulger's "Life of Sir Stamford Raffles" (1897). See also James Sinton's Bibliography in "Journal of a Tour in the Highlands and Western Highlands of Scotland in 1800," by John Leyden (Edinburgh, 1903), "An Anglo-Indian Poet," by P. Seshadri, M.A. (Madras, 1912), and "John Leyden," by W. S. Crockett, in "Famous Edinburgh Students" (1914).

CHAPTER VII

HAWICK AMONG THE HILLS

FEW towns can boast a speedier rise to commercial prosperity than Hawick, the "Glasgow of the Borders." At the beginning of last century the population did not exceed 3,000. Now (1930) it is over 17,000, and the celebrity of the place as a chief seat of the woollen industry is known all over the world. Leyden's prophetic lines have been amply fulfilled :

> "Boast, Hawick, boast ! thy structures reared in blood
> Shall rise triumphant over flame and flood ;
> Still doomed to prosper, since on Flodden's field,
> Thy sons, a hardy band, unwont to yield,
> Fell with their martial King, and, glorious boast !
> Gain'd proud renown where Scotia's fame was lost."

Hawick is almost entirely a nineteenth-century creation. In the number and character of its public buildings, pleasure-parks, well-kept streets, handsome villa residences and its pleasant environment, it may stand alongside any similarly-sized town in the kingdom. Notwithstanding the prosaic routine of the modern township, in the whir of wheels and all the concomitants of a busy manufacturing centre, there remain some interesting touches of bygone history. The poetry and passion of its past life are not lost in the present workaday aspect of the place. Hawick patriotism is proverbial. Probably no town in Scotland is more distinguished for its strong and sterling clannishness. The local traditions have all the old flavour about them, and seem in no danger of perishing. The Flodden spirit has grown in intensity since that dark, doleful day.

Of the beginnings of Hawick it is impossible to speak with definiteness. More than likely the place was a settlement of the Gadeni, who would be drawn towards it, among other reasons, for its favourable situation between two bold and impetuous mountain rivers. On the neck of land where the Slitrig and Teviot meet, the turf and wattle dwellings of the native population were set up, receiving a name characteristic of their site—

Haga-wic, Hawick, "the fenced-in habitation," by which, in spite of many changes of race and language, it has continued to be known. The first mention of the name Hawick is found in connection with the labours of St. Cuthbert in the upper reaches of the Slitrig. It is more than probable that the saint established an early Christian sanctuary at Hawick. We do not, however, hear of a church existing there until the dedication of St. Mary's in 1214. But it can hardly be doubted that the edifice, somewhat ornate as it seems to have been, like most of the ecclesiastical buildings of the period, arose on the site of another structure long sacred to the Christian name. The present church was rebuilt in 1763. Occupying a prominent position on a green knoll above the Slitrig—Leyden's "black haunted Slata"—and surrounded by

> "The ancient graves where all the fathers lie,
> And Teviot's stream that long has murmur'd by"

—the place is dowered with a wealth of memories dear to the heart of Teridom. For centuries it was the kirk of the parish. Here have arisen the stately, solemn swell of the Romish ritual, and the sweet, plaintive simplicity of the Presbyterian psalm. Under the preacher's message how many hearts have been healed, or uplifted to nobler ideals, within these old grey walls! Few buildings are fuller of more touching, more sacred associations than such ancient fanes, in which the Gospel has been proclaimed for hundreds of years. Yet all sorts of incidents crowd their chequered history. Perverted from their distinctively religious uses, they were turned into parliament-halls and justice-courts, into places of rendezvous, and even into military barracks during war. Here, at St. Mary's, in 1342, Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie, one of the best men of his age, while holding a court as Sheriff of the county, was seized by his rival Sir William Douglas, "the black knight of Liddesdale," and carried away over the hills to Hermitage, where he was thrown into a narrow, dark dungeon, and left to perish of starvation—foul deed foully done.

Although Hawick has an undoubted antiquity, of this there are few reminders in the town itself. There was no royal residence in the vicinity, and its religious life centred chiefly in the Church of St. Mary. The only building of strength and note was

the Baron's Tower, opposite the Church, erected about 1155 by the Lovels, Lords of Branxholme and Hawick, the then great family of the district. After passing through many vicissitudes, and for some years the abode of Anne, Duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth, widow of Duke James, who was beheaded in 1685, it passed into ordinary tenancy, and became the leading hotel in the burgh. A more interesting feature is the famous Moat of Hawick, a truncated conical mound, 30 feet high, overlooking the older part of the town. As a relic of prehistoric times it seems hopeless to define its primary purpose. There is considerable diversity of opinion as to the object of those eminences, of which there are upwards of 450 in Scotland and England. Some authorities say the word " moat " or " mote " is purely descriptive, meaning simply a small hill or mound, with no reference to its reputed use as a place for public meeting or a seat of justice, or the tumulus of a chieftain. They were probably a form of fortification, stockaded, sometimes surrounded with water, and capable of being held against a strong attacking force. The popular mind has been accustomed to view them as a relic of Druidic days, and it needs no great stretch of imagination to believe that far back in history they were thus associated. It will be remembered that Scott in the " Lay " refers to this particular moat in Deloraine's ride from Branxholme :

> " Dimly he viewed the Moat-Hill's mound,
> Where Druid shades still flitted round."

Dr. Christison, in his scholarly work on " Early Fortifications in Scotland," summing up his own belief with regard to the Scottish moats, says : " On the whole, it is a tolerably safe conclusion that in Scotland, as in England, the motes were the immediate predecessors of the castles of masonry introduced by the Normans. If they were not so, we know of no other fortresses that can take that place. The Scottish motes have been generally confounded with moothills, or meeting-places, and their military character has even been altogether denied. But that the great majority of the structures bearing the name were intended as fortresses scarcely admits of a doubt."

The great living link between the past and the present of Hawick is the ever-perennial festival of the Common-Riding, the dearest of all the ties that bind the Teri to his native Teviot.

The custom of patrolling the burgh boundaries, or, in Scottish phraseology, "riding the marches," still exists as an annual ceremony in not a few Scottish towns. That at Hawick, however, "bears the gree" for the amount of enthusiasm it evokes and the rich element of tradition woven around it. While to most places the "riding of the marches" is a mere official formality, the Hawick celebration is of the nature of a patriotic demonstration—the perpetual reminder of a heroic incident emblazoned deeply on the history of the burgh. That the tradition in its main essentials has the highest claim to be considered true is well set forth in Craig and Laing's admirable monograph.* The writers have spared no pains in their investigation of the subject. Flodden is the one dark memory in Hawick annals. Like other Border towns, the place sent its quota of able-bodied men to the fatal field. Douglas of Drumlanrig, their Overlord, led them in the thickest of the fight. "Teribus and Terioden" † mingled with the slogans of Selkirk and Jedburgh. No more valiant deeds were done than by the Border contingents. But the battle closed in sad defeat for the Scots, and amid heaps of slain. Brave Douglas and his followers, as thousands more, sacrificed their lives for King and country; and it is this memory which shines through the shame and the sorrow of that dreadful day.

"Round about their gallant King,
For countrie and for crown,
Stude the dauntless Border ring
Till the last was hackit doun.

I blame na what has been—
They maun fa' that canna flee—
But, oh, to see what I hae seen,
To see what now I see!
O Flodden Field!"

There was scarcely a household in which there was not a blank, or a heart that had not learned the secret of a personal anguish. The influence of Flodden is felt even yet, vivid in our own day, gilding the harsh reality with the glow of poetry and

* "The Hawick Tradition of 1514," by R. S. Craig and Adam Laing (1898). See also Craig's "Hawick and the Border" (1927).

† Probably a relic of North Anglian paganism, part of a pious invocation to the Scandinavian deities, Thor and Odin.

pathos. Time and again did the English harrow the Border after their Flodden victory. Teviotdale especially fell a prey to Lord Dacre and his raiders. In Hawick few men were left to defend the town, which was twice partially destroyed. Somewhere in 1514 the incident commemorated on Common-Riding Day is said to have occurred. News reached the town that a band of English marauders had entered the district and were encamped at Hornshole, some two and a half miles down the Teviot, where the river narrows into a deep, dark pool. The young men of the place rose to the occasion, and in the early morning stole down to the spot, surprised the enemy asleep, slew them almost to a man, and returned home in triumph, laden with spoil and displaying a captured flag. Such is the Hornshole tradition, a name writ large in the history of Hawick. There seems no reason to question its authenticity. It is the memory of Hornshole which is pre-eminent at the June festival. The riding of the Commons has become now only a name. A pageant with a more popular appeal has taken its place, and it will be many a long day before it passes into the dim shadow-land of forgotten glories—" old times changed, old manners gone." It is the one event of the year to the Teri. How his heart warms to the occasion and its quaint ceremonies! The cornet and his lads exemplify the pride of the place. What enthusiasm at the " bussing of the colours "! and as the blue flag (a facsimile of the original) flutters in the breeze, and amid the shrill music of fifes and drums the gay procession marches forward, a full tide of patriotic feeling rises within the breast. Then there follow the " snuffing," and the " cornet's chase," the early-morning visit to the Moat, the wearing of oak-sprigs, the incessant " reels," and the " kirking of the cornet " appropriately winding up the proceedings, over all of which the " eternal air " of " Teribus " has been everywhere in evidence.

" Scotia felt thine ire, O Odin!
On the bloody field of Flodden;
There our fathers fell with honour,
Round their King and country's banner.

" Now with spoils and honours laden,
Well-revenged for fatal Flodden,
Home they marched this flag displaying,
This the tune before them playing.

Valentine & Sons, Ltd.

HIGH STREET, HAWICK

HARDEN

" High the trump of fame did raise them,
Poets of those times did praise them,
Sung their feats in muirland ballants—
Scotia's boast was Hawick Callants.

Chorus. " Teribus, ye Teri Odin,
Sons of heroes slain at Flodden,
Imitating Border Bowmen,
Aye defend your Rights and Common."

The literary associations of Hawick are not uninteresting.* Here were born William Fowler, savant and poet, Secretary to Queen Anne ; and Dr. Somerville, the historian of her reign ; Robert and James Wilson, early Hawick annalists ; another James Wilson, a famous political economist, Vice-President of the Board of Trade, and first Financial Member of the Council for India, who died from overwork in 1860. Among poets are Elliot Aitchison ; James Thomson (a native of Bowden, however), author of the " Border Queen " and " Up wi' the Banner " ; John Inglis, whose " Hawick among the Hills " and Frank Hogg's " I like auld Hawick " are prime favourites ; and James Hogg, writer of the popular version of the Common-Riding song. Sir J. A. H. Murray taught a private academy at Hawick for some years, and helped to found the Archæological Society which has done signal service in the field of Border lore. The town had its historian in Mrs. J. Rutherford Oliver, authoress of " Upper Teviotdale and the Scotts of Buccleuch." Scot of Satchells, the rhyming chronicler of the clan, would be familiar with the district. Wilton Dean is said to be the original of " Glenburnie " in Elizabeth Hamilton's domestic tale. Sir Walter Scott paid frequent visits to Hawick, and some of his best-known scenes are in the neighbourhood. In 1803 Wordsworth and his sister were here, when Scott led them to the top of the Vertish Hill overlooking the town and the valley of the Teviot from the west, " from which they could see a wide range of the Border mountains, Ruberslaw, the Carter, and the Cheviots ; and lamented that neither their engagements nor his own would permit them to make an excursion into the wilder glens of Liddesdale, ' where,' said he, ' I have strolled so often and so long that I may say I have a home in every farmhouse.' " At Haggisha' or Burnflat,

* Hawick was not (as has been said) the scene of Gawin Douglas's rectorship, but Hawche, the modern Prestonkirk in East Lothian.

close to the Vertish Hill, Robert Paterson, the prototype of "Old Mortality," was born in 1716. Suitable tablets mark the spot. It was at Joseph Train's suggestion, and aided largely from the legendary stores of the Galloway gauger, that Scott wrote the novel—perhaps the best of his historical romances. As far back as 1793, during a visit to Dunnottar, he made the acquaintance of the original "Old Mortality," and doubtless tracked him frequently afterwards at the self-appointed task of recutting and repairing the tombstones of the faithful. For long did this singular individual wander throughout the Border country, in his large blue bonnet, old-fashioned coat of hodden grey, with waistcoat and breeches of the same, and strong clouted shoes, in company with his bony, wizened, white-haired sheltie—a familiar figure in the churchyards of the Covenant. He died in 1801, and over his grave at Caerlaverock a neat memorial was placed by the publishers of the present volume. The Rev. Nathaniel Paterson, D.D., minister of Galashiels at the Disruption, Moderator of the Free Church in 1850, and author of the "Manse Garden," was a grandson of "Old Mortality."

An excursion in the Scott Country, memorable and pleasurable, may be made from Hawick up the green pastoral valley of the Teviot. There, if anywhere, romance reigns. The spell of Sir Walter is on every side. The Teviot, as much as the Tweed, has been touched by his master-hand. Every name is redolent of the Minstrel and his "Lay." So long as Time sweeps the strings of that tuneful harp, and

> "Its dulcet measures float
> In many a liquid winding note
> Along the banks of Teviot's stream,"

the Scott shrines are not likely to be deserted. After reading the "Lay of the Last Minstrel," one has a wish to wander among the chief scenes of the poem, and to dream its wondrous visions over again. With the Knight of Deloraine, let, then, our watchword be, "For Branxholme, ho!" About two miles out from Hawick there is passed on the left, high up among its engirdling trees, the Peel of Goldielands, square, massive, and fairly well preserved, a Scott stronghold—the "watch-tower of Branxholme," as the author of the "Statistical Account" describes it. Here dwelt the "Laird's Wat, that worthie man," who led the

Scotts at the Reidswire in 1575. His tombstone, with curiously worded inscription, may still be seen in the Museum at Hawick. Soon we reach the junction of the Borthwick and Teviot. And up the Borthwick Water a mile or two is Harden, a place of more than ordinary interest to the Scott student. Embosomed in woodland grandeur, it stands on high ground overlooking a rugged, romantic stretch of glen, shut in on three sides by towering, precipitous banks. Here Auld Wat of Harden reigned a king among Border reivers, and his deeds of derring-do, with many estimable and manful qualities which disclose something more than the mere wild spirit of free-booting, have they not been recorded by the balladists, and graven deep on the tablets of memory? The hero of "Jamie Telfer o' the fair Dodhead," and of a hundred anecdotes and memories scattered wide in Border story, the redoubtable Wat catches, somehow, both our admiration and our sympathy. He it was who wedded the "Flower of Yarrow," from which union there sprang in the seventh degree the most illustrious scion of Border blood. There is little wonder that Scott felt the fascination of the "ancestral shrines" in his frequent visits to Harden and other of the clan-strengths, and rejoiced to rear his own home within easy compass of them. We remember here the tradition (besung by Leyden) of the captive infant brought home in a raid, fostered by the Flower of Yarrow, and reputed to have been the source of many of the sweetest melodies in Border minstrelsy:

> "Of milder mood the gentle captive grew,
> Nor loved the scenes that scared his infant view;
> In vales remote, from camps and castles far,
> He shunned the fearful, shuddering joy of war;
> Content the loves of simple swains to sing,
> Or wake to fame the harp's heroic string;
> He lived o'er Yarrow's fairest Flower to shed the tear,
> And strew the holly leaves o'er Harden's bier;
> But none was found above the minstrel's tomb,
> Emblem of peace, to bid the daisy bloom;
> He, nameless as the race from whence he sprung,
> Saved other names, and left his own unsung."

Passing upwards to Branxholme—poetically Branksome—the valley begins to narrow. What charm in the beauty and abundance and variety of the trees that flank the highway! But the

storied pile is in front of us—a whitewashed mansion-house, still inhabited, large, strong, old, but not ancient in appearance. It was the master-fort of the district, the keep of Upper Teviotdale, the key of the pass between the Tweed basin and "merrie Carlisle." Originally united to the barony of Hawick, and possessed by the Lovels, it passed through many owners, and came finally to the Buccleuch family, who have held it since 1420. Up to 1756 it was their principal seat.

Branxholme was continually exposed to attacks during the English invasions. In 1514, 1533, 1545, and again in 1570, the tower was burned and sacked. Sir Walter Scott commenced to rebuild it in 1571, and it was completed by his widow in 1576. Over the arched doorway is the inscription :

"In . varld . is . nocht . nature . hes . vroucht . yat . sal . lest . ay.

"Thairfore . serve . god . keip . veil . ye . rod . thy . fame . sal . nocht . dekay.

Schir Walter Scot of Branxholme, Knycht. Margret Douglas, 1571."

Other inscriptions and coats of arms are found on its walls, and the whole place has undergone many changes with the changing years. Branxholme's main glory, however, is not in its past history, or the pomp and circumstance surrounding it in the heyday of its power. If there was "another Yarrow" to Wordsworth, there is "another Branxholme" to us. It is not the memory of the fighting barons of Buccleuch, with their tumultuous raids and unending quarrels, which draws the pilgrim's feet to Branxholme's Tower, but the memory of events which the imagination of the Minstrel has conjured up, and which have made for themselves a local habitation and a name.

"Nine-and-twenty knights of fame
Hung their shields in Branksome Hall,
Nine-and-twenty squires of name
Brought them their steeds to bower from stall."

The western tower—Nebsie—is supposed to be the oldest part of the building, and in it was

"The bower that was guarded by word and by spell,
Deadly to hear, and deadly to tell."

A. R. Edwards & Son

BRANXHOLME TOWER, HAWICK

JOHNIE ARMSTRONG'S MEMORIAL AND HENRY SCOTT RIDDELL'S GRAVE

Behind is the "good green wood" where the elvish Dwarf held Lord Cranstoun's steed the while his master sat with the fair Margaret under the "hawthorn green." And down in the meadow beneath the castle, have we not the battleground of dark Musgrave and the champion of Buccleuch? and may we not in imagination see the lists set up—the gorgeously-attired heralds proclaiming the issue—the two steel-clad champions riding forth against each other, with visor closed and lance in rest—the shout of assault, the deadly shock, the prostrate warrior—the sudden appearance of Deloraine, ghastly from illness and pallid with rage—the discovery in the victorious champion of Buccleuch of one long accounted as an enemy of that house? But now, when he is led before the Lady of Branxholme, as the lover of her daughter, the saviour of her son, she breaks her "silence stern and still."

> "Not you, but Fate, has vanquished me;
> Their kindly influence stars may shower
> On Teviot's side and Branksome's Tower,
> For pride is quelled, and love is free."

Branxholme is remembered, too, through Ramsay's song of the "Bonnie Lass o' Branxholme."

> "As I cam in by Teviot side,
> And by the braes o' Branxholme,
> There first I saw my bonnie bride,
> Young, smiling, sweet, and handsome."

Near Allanhaugh Peel, a mile or so from Branxholme, at the junction of the Allan and Teviot, occurred the celebrated duel between Henderson of Priesthaugh—the "Rattlin' Roarin' Willie" of the ballad—and the "Bard of Reull," or "Sweet Milk," as he was nicknamed, in which the latter was slain.

> "On Teviot's side, in fight they stood,
> And tuneful hands were stain'd with blood;
> Where still the thorn's white branches wave,
> Memorial o'er his rival's grave." *

Teviothead is the next notable spot in the valley. At first sight not unlike the tapering spire of a church, the monument to Henry Scott Riddell, author of "Scotland Yet," is seen on the

* See reference in the "Lay," Canto iv., 34, 35; and Allan Cunningham's "Songs of Scotland," ii. 337.

Dryden Knowes, to the right. Near by is the cottage where he resided till his death in 1870, and the " Wild Glen sae Green " of his fine lyric. His grave is in the adjoining churchyard beside that of his third son, W. B. C. Riddell, a youth of remarkable promise. Riddell was born at Ewes in 1798, and from a shepherd rose to be minister of the preaching-station at Carlanrigg, now the parish of Teviothead. He published several volumes in prose and verse, and will be long remembered as the writer of the most patriotic ode in the Scottish language. The Johnie Armstrong Memorial is close at hand, and tells its own tale :

TRADITION RECORDS
THAT NEAR THIS SPOT WERE BURIED

JOHN ARMSTRONG OF GILNOCKIE

AND A NUMBER OF HIS PERSONAL FOLLOWERS,
WHO WERE TREACHEROUSLY TAKEN & EXECUTED
AT CARLANRIGG BY ORDER OF KING JAMES THE V.
DURING HIS EXPEDITION TO PACIFY THE BORDERS
IN JULY 1530.

John murdred was at Carlinrigg
And all his galant companie ;
But Scotland's heart was ne'er sae wae,
To see sae mony brave men die.
Old Ballad.

This Stone erected September 1897.

The Carlanrigg tragedy is one of the foulest blots in Scottish story. The ballad in the " Minstrelsy " commemorating the fate of Armstrong and his men is one of the best examples of the historical class, and has some picturesque and lifelike touches. It was long a tradition that the trees on which they were hanged were immediately blasted, and withered away. Hence Leyden's lines :

" Where rising Teviot joins the Frostylee
Stands the huge trunk of many a leafless tree.
No verdant woodbine wreaths their age adorn ;
Bare are the boughs, the gnarled roots uptorn.
Here shone no sunbeam, fell no summer dew,
Nor ever grass beneath the branches grew,
Since that bold chief who Henry's power defied,
True to his country, as a traitor died.

The sources of the Teviot and the modern inn of Mosspaul, are a few miles further—

> " 'Mong wilds of tawny heath, and mosses dun,
> Through winding glens, scarce pervious to the sun."

Of a river so besung, so history-haunted, so laden with recollections of the Romancist, we can take no better farewell than in his own immortal lines :

> " Sweet Teviot ! on thy silver tide
> The glaring bale-fires blaze no more ;
> No longer steel-clad warriors ride
> Along thy wild and willowed shore ;
> Where'er thou wind'st, by dale and hill,
> All, all is peaceful, all is still,
> As if thy waves, since Time was born,
> Since first they rolled upon the Tweed.
> Had only heard the shepherd's reed,
> Nor startled at the bugle-horn."

CHAPTER VIII

LIDDESDALE

OF the Border counties, Roxburgh has the greatest number of associations with Scott. His early life was spent in the shire, and for his last twenty years Abbotsford was his home. The chief names in Scott biography centre in the north and middle of the county, by the Tweed and its tributaries. There is, however, one district of Roxburghshire which does not belong to Tweedside, yet is as much as any a part of the Scott Country. There Scott found the material for his first success in literature, and no place was more familiar in his early manhood. This was the Valley of the Liddel, separated from the rest of the shire by a broad belt of green, undulating hills, an offshoot of the Cheviots. The Liddel has its source within a few miles of Jed-head across the watershed, and, careering southward for seven-and-twenty miles, it joins the Esk at the Moat of Liddel below Canonbie, and near the famous Netherby Hall.

Liddesdale had a peculiar attraction for Scott. It was practically an unknown land, "like some unkenned-of isle ayont New Holland." Saturated with history and tradition, the last haunt of the balladists, a peel in every glen, it lay as virgin soil to the delver in old romance. Such was the bent of Scott's mind at this period. He had just been called to the Bar, and was in no hurry or need for practice. With the removal of college constraints, and the prospect before him of a professional career, and the desire to cultivate his literary leanings, and no doubt also in his heart of hearts the ambition, like Burns,

> "for puir auld Scotland's sake,
> Some usefu' plan or buik to make,"

he felt that he might indulge his antiquarian hobby not without some measure of profit, and certainly with a fair amount of personal pleasure. Liddesdale afforded perhaps the richest field for research in the South of Scotland, and right joyous was Scott

B. C. Clayton

HERMITAGE

ASHESTIEL

when in the autumn of 1792 the opportunity came for a tour through its wilds. During seven seasons in succession, along with his companion Shortreed, he "raided" as he called it, the lonely glens of Liddel Water, exploring every rivulet to its source, and every ruined peel from foundation to battlement. As evidence of the isolation and inaccessibleness of the place, the roads were of the most primitive character. No wheeled carriage had ever been seen in Liddesdale. Scott's gig, in 1798, was the first vehicle to be driven over its ill-conditioned hill-paths. There was no inn or public-house in the whole valley, and Lockhart describes how the travellers passed "from the shepherd's hut to the minister's manse, and again from the cheerful hospitality of the manse to the rough and jolly welcome of the homestead, gathering wherever they went songs and tunes, and occasionally more tangible relics of antiquity." Never had Scott more exhilarating experiences than on these expeditions. He enjoyed himself to the full. The out-of-door exercise, with its endless round of excitement, and the daily discovery of fresh treasures in romance, were the things on which his imagination had been set. "Eh me!" wrote Shortreed years afterwards, "sic an endless fund o' humour and drollery as he then had wi' him! Never ten yards but we were either laughing or roaring and singing. Wherever we stopped, how brawly he suited himsel' to everybody! He aye did as the lave did; never made himsel' the great man or took ony airs in the company. I've seen him in a' moods in these jaunts, grave and gay, daft and serious, sober and drunk—this, however, even in our wildest rambles, was but rare—but, drunk or sober, he was aye the gentleman. He looked excessively heavy and stupid when he was fou, but he was never out o' gude-humour." Notwithstanding such occasions, excusable no doubt and natural enough at the time, the "raiders" were never really idle. By the close of the day Scott had always been able to "bag" some prize. The Liddesdale excursions were undertaken with a definite aim, and yielded a singularly prolific harvest. Their immediate result was the "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border," a work on which Scott expended more pains than on any other of his productions. Yet is not the true outcome to be found in the Novels themselves? "Guy Mannering" is full of charming Liddesdale pictures. And in the "Minstrelsy"

there are the elements of a hundred historical romances. "No person," says Lockhart, "who has not gone through its volumes for the express purpose of comparing their contents with his great original works, can have formed a conception of the endless variety of incidents and images now expanded and emblazoned by his mature art, of which the first hints may be found either in the text of those primitive ballads, or in the notes, which the happy rambles of his youth had gathered together for their illustration."

It was his unrivalled wealth of legendary lore which fostered in Scott the spirit of the story-teller. As a novelist he found his task so much easier and lightsomer from his earlier training in Liddesdale and among the Selkirkshire uplands, and through the wide historical and antiquarian reading to which he had given much of his leisure. The "raids" were a conspicuous success. It is to be regretted that so little is said about them in the "Life." With a sympathetic peasantry, troops of helpers, and the dalesmen's unconventional reverence for the young advocate—"just a chield like themselves," as they soon discovered—the work went merrily on.

> "Each glen was sought for tales of old,
> Of luckless love, of warrior bold,
> Of sheeted ghost, that had revealed
> Dark deeds of guilt, from man concealed;
> Yea, every tale of ruth or weir
> Could waken pity, love, or fear,
> Were decked anew with anxious pain,
> And sung to native airs again."

In all corners he made his "finds"—far up among the glen heads in solitary shielings, where wrinkled dames crooned to their grandbairns and great-grandbairns lilts and rhymes of a bygone age; from plaided herds and buirdly hinds; from intelligent farmers and encyclopædic dominies; from village worthies and adventurous pedlars; from parish priests and impecunious lairds; from almost everybody who had been known to sing or recite a stranded verse or line of the past. The ballads rescued and pieced together existed only, for the most part, in oral tradition—rugged and crude compositions whose authors remained unknown. They were not wholly the work of one hand, nor did they claim a poetic gracefulness. They would not be the

Border ballads if they did. It is their state of unfinishedness, their lack of correct rhythm, their standing upon other than metrical feet, their dramatic outbursts, and their deepset pathos, which have made them what they are, a species of literature we would not willingly allow to perish. It was reserved for Scott to give them a fixed place in the literary world. His task was a timeous achievement that only one of Scott's calibre could have accomplished. "Long will it live," says Motherwell, "a noble and interesting monument of his unwearied research, curious and minute learning, genius, and taste. It is truly a patriot's legacy to posterity."

The "Minstrelsy" was published in 1802, and met a ready acceptance. A new edition of three volumes followed in 1803, with "Sir Tristrem" as a kind of companion volume in 1804. In the preparation of the "Minstrelsy" Scott surrounded himself with a coterie of able and zealous assistants. Among others who rendered valuable help in the work of research and by original contributions were Heber and Leyden, as mentioned in a former chapter; Joseph Ritson, the antiquary; George Ellis, scholar and critic; Matthew Gregory Lewis, the "Monk"; Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe of Hoddam; James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd; Laidlaw, the "dear Willie" of Scott's later years; Dr. Jamieson, of "Scottish Dictionary" fame; J. B. S. Morritt of Rokeby; the Rev. John Marriott, then a tutor in the Buccleuch family; Anna Seward, the "Swan of Lichfield," and others.

Leyden's contributions, "Lord Soulis," and the "Cout of Keeldar," were entirely of Liddesdale origin. Some of the finest specimens in the collection were gathered in the Liddel glens, where ballads seemed to thrive as nowhere else. The whole district was overrun with tradition in ruined castle and peel, in ancient cross and ghostly graveyard. It was the country of the Elliots, "lions of Liddesdale," of the "sturdy Armstrongs," of the Nixons and the Croziers—"thieves all"—

> "Fierce as the wolf, they rushed to seize their prey;
> The day was all their night, the night their day."

The banks of the Liddel and its tributary burns are studded with the remains of their old peel-houses, and where these have disappeared the sites are still cherished. On the Liddel are Lariston,

the stronghold of the chief of the Elliots ; and Mangerton, the headquarters of the Armstrongs. Syde recalls the celebrated Jock o' the Syde, another of the clan :

" He is weil kend, Johne o' the Syde ;
A greater thief did never ryde."

Park, where dwelt the redoubtable " little Jock Elliot," hero of a hundred frays ; Copshaw, another Elliot strength ; and Westburnflat, have long since crumbled to the ground. On the pretty Water of Hermitage, birk and alder lined, the towers of Hartsgarth, Redheugh, Roan, are no more. Hermitage alone has something of its old-world gloom, hidden in the very heart of the hills, cursed by black and bloody memories. This great fortress of Liddesdale is a shrine for many pilgrim feet in these days of travelling facilities. To gaze on the

" brown ruins, scarr'd with age,
That frown o'er haunted Hermitage,"

to peer into the depths of Dalhousie's death-dungeon, and roam through the romantic scenery of the " dusky vale of Hermitage in Liddesdale," was one of Scott's earliest wishes. With its eerie history he had long been familiar. Legends thick-sown cluster around it. Popular superstition relegated it to the keeping of Redcap, an imp of the Evil One, and the massive pile was said to be yearly sinking into the ground by the very weight of its iniquity. Founded probably by Nicholas de Soulis in 1244, and held by the Soulises for a century, it passed to the Douglases, and " Bell-the-Cat " himself ; then to the Hepburns of Bothwell, and finally to the Buccleuch family. Tradition figures the last Lord Soulis as a monster of oppression and cruelty, a human ogre—done to death by his own menials in a huge boiling cauldron on the Nine-Stane Rig, a Druidic circle a mile or two to the east of the castle. Leyden's " Minstrelsy " ballad on the subject is one of the best from his pen :

" On a circle of stones they placed the pot,
On a circle of stones but barely nine ;
They heated it red and fiery hot,
Till the burnish'd brass did glimmer and shine.

" They rolled him up in a sheet of lead,
A sheet of lead for a funeral pall ;

They plunged him in the cauldron red,
And melted him, lead, and bones and all.

"At the Skelf-hill, the cauldron still
The men of Liddesdale can show ; *
And on the spot where they boil'd the pot,
The spreat and the deer-hair ne'er shall grow."

The Nine-Stane Rig is the scene also of the fragmentary ballad of "Barthram's Dirge" :

"They shot him dead at the Nine-Stane Rig,
Besides the headless cross,
And they left him lying in his blood
Upon the moor and moss.

"They dug his grave but a bare foot deep,
By the edge of the Nine-Stane Burn,
And they covered him o'er with the heather flower,
The moss, and the lady fern."

A bowshot from the castle may be seen the Cout's Pool, and just outside the old Hermitage burial-ground the long, ridgy mound said to be his grave.

The Cout or Chief of Keeldar, in Northumberland, on the Liddesdale border, was the ogre's sworn enemy, but, proof against steel, could not be slain in fair fight. Pursued by Soulis and his men, he stumbled, and, falling into a deep pool of the Hermitage Water, was held down by their spears till he was drowned. Here, too, at Hermitage, Bothwell lay wounded, and was visited by Queen Mary. Languishing not many years afterwards in the Danish prison of Dragsholm, where he died in 1578, Professor Aytoun pictures the erstwhile Lord of all the Marches in a retrospective mood—his murderous, foul career almost at a close :

"Oh ! Hermitage by Liddel side,
My old ancestral tower,
Were I again but Lord of thee,
Nor owning half the power
That in my days of reckless pride
I held, but cast away,
I would not leave thee, Border keep,
Until my dying day.

* This huge vessel, of copper, is said to be preserved at Dalkeith Palace. See *Border Magazine*, January, 1900.

Who owns thee now, fair Hermitage ?
Who sits within thy hall ?
What banner flutters in the breeze
Above the stately wall ?
Does yet the courtyard ring with tramp
Of horses and of men ?
Do bay of hounds and bugle-notes
Sound merry from the glen ?
Or art thou, as thy master is,
A rent and ruined pile ?
Once noble, but deserted now
By all that is not vile."

But the "raids" produced something more than the "Minstrelsy." In writing "Guy Mannering" in 1815, Scott did not forget his experiences among the honest denizens of Hermitage and Liddesdale. And in other novels these recollections come to the front. Here he found his "Charlieshope" in the farm of Millburnholm, now called Millburn, hard by the castle, and the great Original of "Dandie Dinmont" in Willie Elliot, its kindly and hospitable tenant. Scott says the portrait is a composite one, but the likelihood is that Elliot was its chief prototype—"the best rustic picture that has ever been exhibited to the public—the most honourable to rustics, and the most creditable to the heart as well as the genius of the artist; the truest to Nature, the most interesting and the most complete in all its lineaments." James Davidson of Hyndlee, in Southdean parish, another supposed prototype, with his breed of "Peppers" and "Mustards," was not known to Scott till some years after the novel was written, and when read in the hearing of Davidson, the worthy man fell asleep. It is possible that Scott had also in his mind Blackhouse on Yarrow and the Laidlaws. But the distinct locale of the story would seem to declare for the Liddesdale store-farmer. The district has seen many changes since Scott's day, and is no longer the impenetrable "savage land" it was then believed to be. The Waverley Route of the London and North Eastern Railway passes down the valley within a few miles of its most noted landmarks. The whole glen has been converted from a bleak succession of moors and quaking moss-hags into a picturesque combination of moor and woodland, rich pastoral holms, and cultivated fields.

Near the junction of the Liddel and Hermitage stood the

original Castle of the Lords of Liddesdale, around which sprang up the ancient village of Castleton, which gives name to the parish. A part of the old market cross and the parish churchyard are the sole relics of the place, and of the once-important stronghold it is impossible to trace more than the site. Two miles further down the river is the village of Newcastleton—formerly Copshawholm—founded in 1793 by Henry, third Duke of Buccleuch, a thriving centre and favourite tourist resort. The chief scenes of Lord Ernest Hamilton's romance "The Outlaws of the Marches" are laid in Liddesdale; William Scott, compiler of "Border Exploits" and other works, is buried in Castleton Churchyard; James Telfer, the balladist and author of "Barbara Gray," one of the best Border stories, now all but forgotten, taught for many years the school at Saughtree on the Liddel Water, dying in 1862; and Dr. John Armstrong, the poet, author of the "Art of Preserving Health," was a native of the parish, of which his father and brother were ministers. In thus apostrophizing his native Liddel, may we not echo his sentiments?

"Such the stream
On whose Arcadian banks I first drew air,
Liddel; till now except in Doric lays
Tuned to her murmurs by her love-sick swains,
Unknown in song, though not a purer stream
Through meads more flowery, more romantic groves,
Rolls to the western main. Hail, sacred flood!
May still thy hospitable swains be blest
In rural innocence; thy mountains still
Teem with the fleecy race; thy tuneful woods
For ever flourish, and thy vales look gay
With painted meadows and the golden grain!"

CHAPTER IX

SCOTT'S FIRST BORDER HOME

"SHERIFF of Ettrick Forest," said Scott, was the proudest of his titles. The historic Forest comprised all the land lying between the Ettrick and Yarrow valleys and the banks of Tweed. Covered in remoter times with a dense profusion of oak, birch, and hazel, and up to the reign of James V. a hunting-ground of the Stuarts, it was stocked with a breed of famous red deer, the largest and finest in the kingdom. James, to increase his revenues, turned thousands of sheep into the royal domain to graze. This act led to the entire destruction of the trees, and the conversion of the Forest into pasture. It is now something like a deer forest; it contains everything but trees, and verifies the witticism that a forest is a place where no trees grow. Scott's appointment dated from December, 1799, and came through the Duke of Buccleuch. He had £300 a year as Sheriff, and from legacies left by his father and uncle, along with his wife's portion from her brother, his income, irrespective of forsenic gains, was about £1,000. He continued to live at Lasswade, travelling to the scene of his duties at Selkirk, the capital of the shire. On such occasions his headquarters were usually the little inn at Clovenfords, close to the Tweed, and within six miles of Selkirk. The place was, and still is, the centre of a wide fishing district. For Scott it had a distincter claim as within easy reach of the Yarrow and Ettrick glens, where he longed to pursue his favourite ballad-hunting expeditions. The Lord-Lieutenant of the County (Lord Napier), however, objecting to his living at such a distance as Lasswade, he was compelled to look out for a more convenient residence. Accordingly we find him in 1804 (having first thought of Harden, the ancestral home of the Scotts) leasing the modest mansion-house and farm of Ashestiel, on the south bank of the Tweed, the property of his cousin, General Russell, then absent with his regiment in India. The place would be familiar enough to Scott. In 1794 he seems

TOM PURDIE
(*From a Painting at Abbotsford*)

TOM PURDIE'S GRAVE

to have spent a pleasant holiday with the Russells, and it was only a mile or so from Clovenfords. By July he had become settled in his new abode, and for the next eight years Ashestiel was the centre of some of the happiest associations of his life. For one of Scott's temperament and hobbies there could not have been a more ideal dwelling. Quiet and retired, and situated on a singularly enchanting reach of the Tweed, the scenery all round about has been well imaged in his own deathless lines. "You approached it," says Lockhart, "through an old-fashioned garden, with holly-hedges, and broad, green terrace-walks. On one side, close under the windows, is a deep ravine, clothed with venerable trees, down which a mountain rivulet is heard, more than seen, in its progress to the Tweed. The river itself is separated from the high bank on which the house stands only by a narrow meadow of the richest verdure. Opposite and all around are the green hills. The valley there is narrow, and the aspect in every direction is that of perfect pastoral repose. The heights immediately behind are those which divide the Tweed from the Yarrow, and the latter celebrated stream lies within an easy ride, in the course of which the traveller passes through a variety of the finest mountain scenery in the South of Scotland." Ashestiel sprang from an old peel of the same name, parts of which may still be traced in the present building. For several generations it was held by the Kers, then by the Earl of Traquair, and a Covenating Murray of Philiphaugh. In 1712 it passed to the Russells, whose representatives are still in possession. The place has altered considerably—"sorrowfully changed," as Ruskin said in 1883, since Scott's occupancy. The east wing has been added, and the entrance, which formerly faced the Tweed, is now turned hillwards. Scott wrote in the old dining-room—the modern library, a quaint, old-fashioned room on the east side of the entrance-porch. Through one of the original windows, now converted into a press beside the fireplace, the greyhounds Douglas and Percy bounded out and in at will. Scott kept his books upstairs in his dressing-room. Not any part of the present furniture is associated with him except a large invalid chair, gifted by Scott to his cousin, Jane Russell, and afterwards used by himself during the last sad days at Abbotsford. A portrait and a punch-bowl, presents to his cousin, are the sole remaining relics.

Here, then, Scott spent what have been considered his happiest years. Revisiting Ashestiel in 1826, he wrote in his Journal: "Here I passed some happy years. Did I ever pass unhappy years anywhere?" But the eight years of his first Border home were conspicuous for their free, genuine light-heartedness and uninterrupted healthiness; for the amount of pleasurable work which they yielded, and their first flushes of literary success; for dear friendships formed, and enduring love-links fastened about so many humble lives in the homes around. No cloud capped his sky. All was fair, sunshiny weather in the sweet, glad heyday of his pure and noble manhood. Scott's Ashestiel life was largely lived out-of-doors. No man tested Nature's possibilities more than he, combining strenuous intellectual toil with physical exertions which of themselves would have sufficed to tax to the uttermost men of less energetic temper and robust frame. He rode much, and, as always, with a fearlessness which often alarmed his companions. "The de'il's in ye, Shirra," one of these would sometimes say to him; "ye'll never halt till they bring ye hame wi' your feet foremost." To field-sports, for which the neighbourhood afforded ample opportunity, he gave himself with his accustomed ardour; by day there was coursing with the greyhounds, or random riding over the hills; and at night, salmon-spearing by torchlight—an amusement which seemed to derive much of its zest from the prospect of duckings and broken shins. All these activities, together with the concerns of his own farm and the care of his cousin's woods, gave him plenty to do; yet he found time, summer after summer, to renew the "raids" of earlier days. Accompanied by his friend Skene, he little by little explored all the scenes celebrated in Border history and tradition, and Skene did not fail to notice the extraordinary popularity of the "Shirra" among the farmer-folk of Ettrick and Yarrow.

Altogether, life at Ashestiel fulfilled Scott's ideal of combined simplicity and comfort. There was nothing grand about his establishment; but he was happy to invite his friends to take a scamper with him over the hills in the morning, and return, with appetites whetted by fresh air and exercise, to a clean table-cloth, a leg of forest mutton, and a blazing hearth. Ashestiel was written deep on Scott's heart, and had he been able to

purchase the property Abbotsford would never have arisen from the swamps of Clarty Hole.

At Ashestiel his fame as a poet rose to its full height, and the locality is therefore more interesting to students of his poetry than any other Scott shrine. "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" (partly), "Marmion," "The Lady of the Lake," were written and published during his stay at Ashestiel, and the first chapters of "Waverley" dashed off and laid aside, to be examined some years later, and finally lost sight of until their momentous reappearance in 1813. As might be expected, the Ashestiel poems are not without a strongly local colour. The Introductory Epistles to "Marmion," in particular, are crowded with allusions to the scenery and habits of the district and incidents of former times. A knoll, clad with oak and birch, on the adjoining farm of Peel, and overlooking the Peel or Glenkinnon Burn, where Scott is said to have penned large portions of "Marmion," came to be called the "Shirra's Knowe"; and another favourite spot is pointed out underneath a tree on the river's bank not far from the house. There, looking out towards Neidpath Fell and the "sister heights of Yair" with the "ever-dear Tweed" (Thomas Aird's pathetic phrase) babbling at his feet, and the glamour of old romance around him, the great Minstrel sang his immortal lays. As a picture of early Winter on Tweedside, nothing could be truer to fact, or more graceful and tender in its setting, than the first lines of "Marmion," the grandest of Scott's verse romances. The opening reference is to the ravine on the east of the house, down which thunders the Peel Burn in frequent winter spates:

"November's sky is chill and drear,
November's leaf is red and sere:
Late, gazing down the steepy linn,
That hems our little garden in,
Low in its dark and narrow glen
You scarce the rivulet might ken,
So thick the tangled greenwood grew,
So feeble trilled the streamlet through;
Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen
Through bush and briar, no longer green,
An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,
Brawls over rock and wild cascade,
And foaming brown, with doubled speed,
Hurries its waters to the Tweed."

" The Lay of the Last Minstrel " was inspired by scenes in the immediate neighbourhood. It was begun at the request of the Countess of Dalkeith during one of Scott's visits to the Buccleuch family seat of " sweet Bowhill," across the hills from Ashestiel above the junction of Yarrow and Ettrick. " The Lady of the Lake "—his biggest financial success—appeared in 1810, sending thousands to view the magnificent Trossachs and Highland scenery. A large amount of other work, chiefly magazine and editorial, was done by Scott at Ashestiel, and some popular lyrical pieces are the product of this period. It is to be regretted that Ashestiel does not receive the recognition it ought to have as a prominent Scott landmark. There is reason to fear that Ruskin's taunt may be, after all, only too well founded, that the birthplace of " Marmion " is in danger of being forgotten as a sweet shrine of the greatest figure in Scottish literary history.

One cannot pass from the place without recalling Scott's humbler friendships. Here Tom Purdie entered his service as shepherd, a post which had been offered to James Hogg, but declined. Purdie was the greatest " character " either at Ashestiel or Abbotsford. He first came under Scott's notice in his capacity of Sheriff, on a charge of poaching, when the poor fellow gave such an account of himself and his circumstances, with a kind of sly pathetic humour, that Scott's heart went out towards him, and instead of punishing he took him into his employment. From shepherd he rose to be forester and general factotum. Tom proved a faithful servant, notwithstanding his somewhat thirsty habits, which drew from Scott the threatened epitaph : " Here lies one who might have been trusted with untold gold, but not with unmeasured whisky." When he died, in 1829, an epitaph of a very different nature, as will be seen, was cut upon his tombstone in Melrose Churchyard. Peter Mathieson, Purdie's brother-in-law, became coachman to Scott during the Ashestiel life, and survived him some years. Scott's relationship with his dependents was of a peculiarly happy type, and emphatically an exception to the cynic's rule. He was a hero to those who knew him most intimately in the common and disillusionizing routine of domestic life.

Scott's homes were seldom without a stiff list of visitors. At Lasswade he had troops of acquaintances coming to see him from

the city. Ashestiel was no better, and Abbotsford was likened to a hotel. Literary aspirants, publishers, booksellers, antiquaries, all found their way to Ashestiel. But the most agreeable of his visitants were his own personal friends. Skene spent there some pleasant holidays, and he was honoured with a visit from Southey, and other monarchs of the realms of rhyme. Across the hills from Foulshiels rode Mungo Park, the famous traveller, and his brother Archie, who were fast friends of the "Shirra." Many a long talk had Park and Scott on the subject of African exploration. They parted for ever on Williamhope Ridge, at the head of the Peel Glen, a wild, solitary spot on the Tweed and Yarrow watershed. A small ditch divided the moor from the road, and in going over it Park's horse stumbled, and nearly fell. "I am afraid, Mungo," said Scott, "that is a bad omen." To which Park answered, smiling, "Freits follow those who look to them." With this expression, he struck the spurs into his horse, and Scott never saw him again.

A number of notable places lie around Ashestiel. Clovenfords recalls Wordsworth's, as well as Scott's, associations with the little inn. Here lodged the Lake poet in 1803, when half persuaded to turn aside to Yarrow:

> "And when we came to Clovenford,
> Then said my winsome marrow,
> 'Whate'er betide we'll turn aside
> And see the Braes of Yarrow.'"

Not till 1814, however, did he gaze on the haunted stream. But the Laureate's fine lines on "Yarrow Unvisited" will always link the classic vales together. Further down is Yair with the rocky gorge of the river, of which Scott wrote:

> "From Yair—which hills so closely bind,
> Scarce can the Tweed his passage find,
> Though much he fret, and chafe, and toil,
> Till all his eddying currents boil."

Yair House, long the home of the Pringles, once a seat of the Kers, whose quaint epitaph in Melrose Abbey touched the heart of Washington Irving, is close by. And almost opposite we can see the old manor-house of Fairnalee, in the turret of which Alison Rutherford, afterwards Mrs. Cockburn, is said to have composed her version of the "Flowers of the Forest," beginning,

" I've seen the smiling of Fortune beguiling."

She was born here in 1713, and died at Edinburgh in 1794. Up the Tweed from Ashestiel a short distance, perched on the hill-side—Scott's favourite Sunday walk—is the ruined peel of Elibank,* an ancient seat of the Murrays, long famous in Border story. Here tradition has celebrated " the strangest marriage in history," when young Scott of Harden, son of " auld Wat," preferring the matrimonial noose to the gallows-tree, wedded " Muckle-mou'ed Meg," the unwinsome daughter of Sir Gideon Murray. Both Scott and Hogg, it is to be feared, have been guilty of embellishing what was no more than a legend.† The marriage did not take place hurriedly, but was the subject of a carefully-completed contract, to which there were four assenting parties—the two fathers, and William Scott, younger of Harden, and *Agnes* Murray, the two to be united. The document still exists amongst the Elibank Papers, bearing the date July 14, 1611. Sir Gideon had three sons and only one daughter. From the union of the latter, through her third son Walter Scott, the founder of the Raeburn branch of the family, sprang Sir Walter Scott. Raeburn's eldest son fell in a duel in a field near Selkirk, still known as Raeburn's Meadow. The second son, Walter, became a zealous Jacobite, and was called " Beardie," from a vow which he made never to shave his beard till the Stuarts were restored. Sir Walter Scott said of him " that it would have been well if his zeal for the vanished dynasty had stopped with his letting his beard grow. But he took arms, and intrigued in their cause, until he lost all he had in the world, and, as I have heard, ran a narrow risk of being hanged, had it not been for the interference of Anne, Duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth." In the Introduction to Canto VI. of " Marmion," Sir Walter describes his " great-grandsire " :

> " With amber beard and flaxen hair,
> And reverend apostolic air,
> Small thought was his, in after time
> E'er to be hitch'd into a rhyme.

* At Elibank farm-house Dr. William Russell, the historian of Ancient and Modern Europe, was born in 1741.

† See " Border Antiquities" for Scott's version of the incident; and Letter to Miss Seward, June 29, 1802, in the " Life," with the unfinished ballad of the " Reiver's Wedding "; also Hogg's " Fray of Elibank " in the " Mountain Bard."

The simple sire could only boast
That he was loyal to his cost ;
The banish'd race of kings revered,
And lost his land—but kept his beard."

He died at Kelso in 1729. Robert Scott, " Beardie's " second son, was Sir Walter Scott's grandfather, the Sandyknowe farmer.

The Tweed by Ashestiel and Elibank has been styled the " anglers' Paradise " :

" Frae Holylee to Clovenfords
A chancier bit ye canna hae,"

sings the spirited Stoddart and numerous enthusiasts besides. The Nest, on the opposite bank of the river from Ashestiel, is the headquarters of the Edinburgh Angling Club (founded in 1847), whose " Songs," republished in 1900, are full of references to the richness of the scenery at this particular stretch, and the pleasure in plying the " gentle art " within a region so romantic. Here many of Andrew Lang's choicest fishing memories are centred, and not a few hearts beat close to his in a brotherhood of the reel as he rhapsodizes :

" The ferox rins in rough Loch Awe,
A weary cry frae ony toun :
The Spey that loups o'er linn and fa',
They praise a' ither streams aboon ;
They boast their braes o' bonny Doon :
Gie *me* to hear the ringing reel,
Where shilfas sing and cushats croon
By fair Tweedside, at Ashestiel ! "

CHAPTER X

TRAQUAIR AND ST. RONAN'S

SHORTLY after Scott settled at Ashestiel he began the writing of the first of what was destined to be the most marvellous series of prose romances in the English language. He had thrown together, he tells us, about one-third of the first volume of "Waverley," and had got John Ballantyne to advertise it as a forthcoming publication, when he cast the manuscript aside, chiefly on the advice of his friend William Erskine (afterwards Lord Kinnedder), who had sharpened his critical knife rather keenly over it. For five years the manuscript lay untouched. It seems to have been shown to James Ballantyne about 1810, but was lost sight of again for other three years; indeed, Scott had no recollection of its whereabouts. It was not until the summer of 1813 when by a mere accident the missing sheets were discovered, the author's thoughts at the time being centred on a supply of fishing-tackle for a friend. No sooner, however, did his eye light upon them in an "odds-and-ends" bureau in the lumber-room at Abbotsford than he set himself with rekindled enthusiasm to complete the story. This he did within an incredibly short space of time, dashing off the last two volumes during the evenings of three summer weeks. "Waverley" was published annoymously on July 7, 1814, with what result is well known. It became the universal topic. Five editions were sold off within as many months, and on his return from a cruise with the Lighthouse Commissioners Scott found himself the unacknowledged lion of the hour. The year 1814 was an epoch-making one in British Literature, when the "Great Unknown" commenced to charm the reading public with his unrivalled creations, in the wholesomest fiction which had been before it for many a day. The popularity of "Waverley" and its successors has never waned, but vastly increased with the years. Edition after edition has been poured forth from the press, and the literature that has grown up around Scott and

C. M. Hardie, R.S.A.

FINDING THE MS. OF "WAVERLEY"

his writings comprises perhaps the largest contribution to the life and work of any single man.

Living at Ashestiel when the first portion of "Waverley" was penned, we may naturally expect it to be coloured by the scenery of the district. Hence Tully-Veolan, the seat of Cosmo Comyne Bradwardine of Bradwardine, is understood to have for part prototype the ancient, weather-beaten, history-haunted House, or Palace of Traquair, six or seven miles further up the Tweed. Although, as Scott himself hints, there may be no particular mansion so described—and half a dozen places assume the honour—Traquair is believed to be the nearest approach to an original. In Chapters VIII. and IX. of "Waverley" the author sketches a "Scottish manor-house sixty years since," and there should be no difficulty in discerning in it a definite enough pen-portrait of that pallid, forlorn pile, "stricken all o'er with eld." After picturing the village of Tully-Veolan, peat-stacked and dung-hilled, its street rugged and flinty, and the houses set down with no respect to order, he goes on to describe the baronial residence itself:

"About a bowshot from the end of the village appeared the enclosures, proudly denominated the Parks of Tully-Veolan, being certain square fields, surrounded and divided by stone walls five feet in height. In the centre of the exterior barrier was the upper gate of the avenue, opening under an archway, battlemented on the top, and adorned with two large weather-beaten, mutilated masses of upright stone, which, if the tradition of the hamlet could be trusted, had once represented two rampant Bears, the supporters of the family of Bradwardine. This avenue was straight and of moderate length, running between a double row of very ancient horse-chestnuts, planted alternately with sycamores, which rose to such huge height, and flourished so luxuriantly, that their boughs completely overarched the broad road beneath. Beyond these venerable ranks, and running parallel to them, were two high walls, of apparently the like antiquity, overgrown with ivy, honeysuckle, and other climbing plants. The avenue seemed very little trodden, and chiefly by foot-passengers; so that, being very broad and enjoying a constant shade, it was clothed with grass of a deep and rich verdure, excepting where a footpath, worn by occasional passengers, tracked with a natural sweep the way from the upper to the lower gate. This nether portal, like the former, opened in front of a wall, ornamented with some rude sculpture, with battlements on the top, over which were seen, half hidden by the trees of the avenue, the high, steep roofs and narrow gables of the mansion, with lines indented into steps, and corners decorated with small turrets. . . . The house seemed to consist of two or three high, narrow, and steep-roofed buildings,

projecting from each other at right angles. It had been built at a period when castles were no longer necessary, and when the Scottish architects had not yet acquired the art of designing a domestic residence. The windows were numberless, but very small; the roof had some nondescript kind of projections, called bartisans, and displayed at each frequent angle a small turret, rather resembling a pepper-box than a Gothic watch-tower."

There are, of course, features in Tully-Veolan not found in Traquair at all; still, as Robert Chambers points out, the likeness is "sufficiently strong to support the idea that this scene formed the original study of the more finished and bold-featured picture of the novelist." Scott was a frequent visitor at Traquair. Every aspect of the place had a peculiar fascination for him, and it would have been strange had he not introduced it into one or other of his writings. It was the kind of house in which he delighted, and the whole glen of the Quair was full of memories dear to his heart. Traquair is believed to be the oldest inhabited house in Scotland. Originally a peel-tower overhanging the Tweed, whose waters lashed its south-most wall, it gradually grew to larger proportions, and a place of importance in early Scottish history. To-day it stands solitary in its old-worldness, no abode in Scotland more quaint and curious, turreted, walled, buttressed, windowed, loopholed, all as in the olden time. Such a building would at once claim the fancy of a romancist, in weaving around it the most charming or weirdest tales. Within are preserved many relics of the past. Here is the bed on which Queen Mary slept during her visit in 1566, and the oaken cradle of the infant James VI. A number of fine paintings adorn the walls. The library is rich in tomes of ancient date. Several manuscripts of the Bible and prayer-books belong to the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, in beautiful penmanship, on fine vellum, and highly illuminated. The estate of Traquair was held by no fewer than sixteen proprietors * before it passed to the Stuart family, whose descendant (somewhat remote) is still in possession. Probably

* Amongst these were Lord James Douglas, Bruce's devoted adherent; a branch of the Murrays; the powerful family of the Boyds; Dr. William Rogers, the musician, James III.'s ill-starred favourite; the Earl of Buchan, whose son, James Stuart, was the founder of the Traquair family. He fell at Flodden. His great-grandson was the first Earl above mentioned, who succeeded to the estates in 1606.

the most notable of the Earls of Traquair was the first of the title. His remarkable career presents a striking example of the mutability of earthly greatness. From being Lord High Treasurer of Scotland, the highest office in the Government, and Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly, which dignity he held in 1639, his unscrupulous character at last found him out, until, drifting lower and lower in the social scale, he was reduced to the greatest straits, compelled even to ask an alms in the city street. One who witnessed him in that sad plight—Fraser of Kirkhill—sets down in his diary that "he was a true emblem of the vanity of the world—a very meteor. I saw him begging in the streets of Edinburgh. He was in an antique garb, and wore a broad old hat, short cloak, and pannier breeches; and I contributed in my quarters in the Canongate towards his relief. We gave him a noble, he standing with his hat off. The Master of Lovat, Culbockie, Glenmorrison, and myself were there, and he received the piece of money from my hand as humbly and thankfully as the poorest suppliant. It is said that at a time he had not wherewithal to pay for cobbling his boots, and died in a poor cobbler's house." He died in 1659, "sitting in his chair, without any preceding sickness, and but little lamented." The annotator of Scott of Scotstarvet's "Staggering State of Scots Statesmen" says that at his burial this unfortunate nobleman "had no mortcloth, but a black apron; nor towels, but leashes belonging to some gentlemen that were present; and the grave being two feet shorter than his body, the assistants behoved to stay till the same was enlarged and he buried." It is this Earl who figures in the ballad of "Christie's Will," first published in the "Minstrelsy," and composed for the most part by Scott:

> "Traquair has ridden up Chapelhope,
> And sae has he down by the Grey Mare's Tail;
> He never stinted the light gallop
> Until he speer'd for Christie's Will."

When at the height of his power, he had a lawsuit of great importance to be decided in the Court of Session, and there was every reason to believe that the judgment would turn upon the casting vote of the President, Sir Alexander Gibson (Lord Durie). Durie was an able and conscientious lawyer, incapable

of bribe or intimidation, and it was necessary for the success of the Lord Treasurer's scheme that he should, in one way or other, be disposed of. Traquair accordingly enlisted in his service a stalwart Borderer, William Armstrong, known, for the sake of distinction, as "Christie's Will," a descendant of Johnie of Gilnockie, who for some marauding exploits had been imprisoned in the Tolbooth of Jedburgh, and was indebted to Traquair for his liberty, if not for his life. To this daring freebooter the Earl applied for help in his extremity. Without hesitation he agreed to kidnap the President, and keep him out of the way till the cause was decided. This he managed to accomplish whilst the judge was taking his customary airing on Leith Sands. Blindfolded, and muffled in a large cloak, Durie was borne on horseback behind "Christie's Will" across the most unfrequented country roads to the Tower of Graham, near Moffat, in whose dungeon he spent three dreary months, receiving his food through an aperture in the wall, seeing no one, and hardly ever hearing the sound of a human voice. At length the lawsuit was decided in Traquair's favour, and Will was directed to set the President at liberty, which he did exactly after the manner of his capture, setting him down on the same spot by the shore of Leith.

"Traquair has written a privie letter,
And he has sealed it wi' his seal—
'Ye may let the auld brock out o' the poke:
My land's my ain, and a's gane weel.'"

How very different the career of the last Earl—the eighth—whose unbounded generosity and amiable disposition made him the friend alike of rich and poor! Albeit an eccentric individual, his little oddities were overlooked in the light of his large-heartedness and the pure simplicity of his life. He died in 1861, and was followed fourteen years later by his sister, Lady Louisa, in the hundredth year of her age—the last of the old line of Stuarts, who held the barony for close on four centuries.

The magnificent avenue—said to be ghost-haunted—and closed gateway, flanked with huge guardian Bears—"most grotesque supporters"—are conspicuous objects on the highway. The shutting up of the gate of Traquair is a subject of speculation in the district. Several reasons are given. The defeat at Culloden and the failure of the Stuart hopes was a

TRAQUAIR HOUSE

B. C. Clayton

TRAQUAIR : THE CLOSED GATE

bitter blow to this Border Jacobite family, and the tradition that finds most acceptance in Peeblesshire is that the gate has remained unopened since the '45. It is said that Prince Charlie, during his six weeks' reign in Edinburgh, rode to Traquair in person to persuade the Earl of that day to come "out." He declined, but, in escorting his guest to the head of the avenue, vowed that the gate should never be opened till a Stuart and a Catholic was on the throne. Others say it has stood closed since the funeral of the seventh Earl's Countess in 1796. When the cortege had passed through, the massive gate swung back mysteriously and closed itself, the Earl declaring his intention of never having it opened until another Countess should be brought home to fill the place of her whose corpse had just been borne out. But that never occurred, and the Earldom itself is extinct.

Traquair is the centre of a historic and classic countryside. Few places are more redolent of song and poetry. After Yarrow, its nearest neighbour, it is an easy second. The very name has music in it—"the strath of the winding burn." This parish is one of Nature's beauty spots. With abundance of wood and water, fertile fields, and richly-pastured hill-lands ever pleasant to the eye, life here should be truly Arcadian. No reeking factories, no river pollution, no swarming population, none of the modern disturbing elements to break in on its quiet and pensive charm!

Barely six miles from Traquair manse gate you reach the Yarrow, touching the storied stream at the Gordon Arms. Past the top of the steep hill road, leading out from Traquair by the Paddy Slacks and Glenlude, through one of the greenest, purest, most pathetic glens in the Borderland, on the ridge of the watershed, and in the descent on the other side, the first glimpse is caught of the Yarrow. It is to this spot that Wordsworth refers in his "Effusion on the Death of James Hogg":

> "When first, descending from the moorlands,
> I saw the stream of Yarrow glide
> Along a bare and open valley,
> The Ettrick Shepherd was my guide."

Wordsworth was here in September, 1814. "We had lodged," he writes, "the night before at Traquair, where Hogg

had joined us, and also Dr. Anderson, the editor of the 'British Poets,' who was on a visit at the manse." Their lodging was at Traquair Knowe, then tenanted by Willie Laidlaw, whom Wordsworth had met at Jedburgh eleven years previously. He seems to have arrived at Traquair unexpectedly, as Laidlaw was from home. Mrs. Laidlaw sent for Hogg, who came across the hills from Yarrow to meet his brother bard, accompanying him back thither. They paid a visit to the manse, but the minister, the Rev. James Nicol, himself a poet, was also from home. Nicol was a native of Innerleithen, and was presented to Traquair in 1802, where he died in 1819. A true singer, and the author of two volumes of verse, his best compositions are an uncommonly fine lyric, "Where Quair rins sweet amang the Flowers," and a humorous ballad, "Halucket Meg." One of his sons became Professor of Natural Science in Aberdeen University. Willie Laidlaw has a stronger claim to remembrance. Born at Blackhouse in 1780, and thrown early into the company of James Hogg, his father's shepherd, and meeting with Scott and Leyden on their ballad expeditions, he, too, became fired with the Border spirit, assisting not a little in the preparation of the third volume of the "Minstrelsy." By and by he took to farming, but lost heavily at Traquair and elsewhere, and finally settled at Kaeside, on the Abbotsford estate, as Scott's steward and amanuensis. He wrote for the magazines and dabbled in poetry. Scott and he were on the most cordial terms, and to many of Laidlaw's suggestions Scott was indebted for improvements in the novels. "Lucy's Flittin'" is the lyric which best preserves Laidlaw's name as a poet. He wrote other pieces, but they have not the charm and winsomeness with which he immortalized the devotion of his broken-hearted heroine. Although a disputed point, it seems certain that the scene was laid at Glen of Traquair, and not at Blackhouse. The present author knew persons who claimed to have knowledge of the circumstances under which the song was written, and in Laidlaw's own MS. the evidence is in favour of Glen, which he spells with a capital G. In the "Forest Minstrel," where it first appeared, the printing of the word with a small *g* is a mistake.*

* Laidlaw's MS. has been seen by the present writer. The Jamie of the song was James Gray, afterwards Bailie Gray of Edinburgh, whose

With the crisis of 1825–26, Laidlaw quitted Scott's service for a time, but returned in 1830. When 1832 came, he migrated northwards to Ross-shire, where he was successively factor on the estates of Seaforth and Balnagown. His health failing, he went to reside with his brother James, a sheep-farmer at Contin, near Dingwall, where he died, May 18, 1845. His remains were interred in the churchyard of Contin, under the shade of Tor Achilty, one of the loftiest and most picturesque of the Ross-shire mountains. The Lord of the Manor, Sir George S. Mackenzie of Coul, erected a marble tablet to his memory.

Outstanding among the poetic shrines of Traquair is, or rather was, its "bonnie Bush." The whole valley of the Quair is dotted over with plantations of birch, rowan, and oak, remnants of the Forest of Ettrick, and of the old Wood of Caledon. There can be no difficulty in finding the site of the birken clump, so celebrated in song—about 300 yards or so down the valley from Orchardmains, on the left bank of the Quair. Of the original Bush, which in Scottish phraseology is applied to a clump of trees as well as to one tree of bushy habit of growth, only two trees remain. Gaunt and gnarled, "wi' grey moss bearded owre," they can hardly be called trees, but dead and decaying stumps, relics of romantic days, the last silent witnesses to the tryst of many a lad and lass who long have

"Been lying 'neath the grass,
The green, green grass o' Traquair Kirkyaird."

As far back as 1725, Robert Crawford of Auchinames, a West Country man, but wondrously wedded to Border life and scenery, sang of "the Bush aboon Traquair" in the quaint if doleful lyric, "Hear me, ye nymphs and every swain,
I'll tell how Peggy grieves me.
Though thus I languish and complain,
Alas! she ne'er believes me;

father, William Gray, held for many years the small farm of Glen. He died in his 101st year. Lucy was a servant with the Grays, and the father declined to allow the son to marry her. According to others, they were afterwards married. It may be noted that Glen is one of the oldest place-names in Peeblesshire. "Sarah of Glen" did homage to Edward I in 1296. Here Captain Porteous of the 1736 "Mob" notoriety is said to have been born. There is a story that, when a boy, he felled the favourite hen of an old woman at Glen, who forthwith uttered the prophetic imprecation, "May there be as many folk at your death as there are feathers on my puir chuckie!"

My vows and sighs like silent air,
Unheeded, never move her.
At the bonnie Bush aboon Traquair
'Twas there I first did love her."

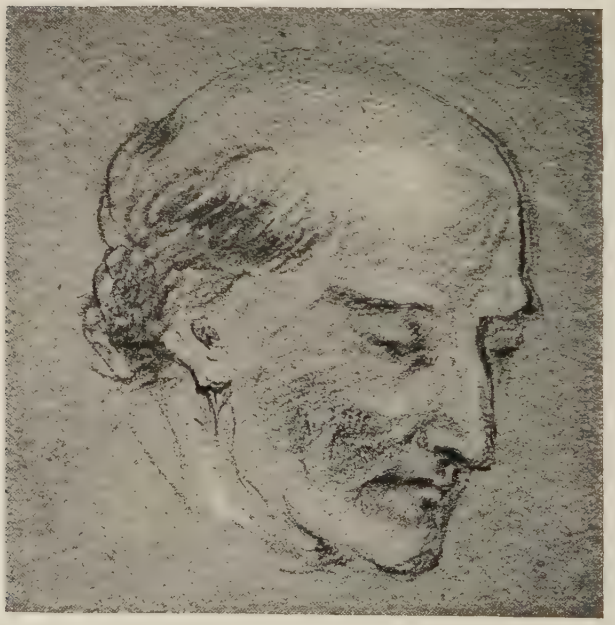
Other noteworthy singers have cast the glamour of their muse around Traquair—Nicol, already referred to; Hogg, in his "Over the hills to Traquair"; "Delta" Moir in a beautiful sonnet; Professor Veitch, in many expressive lines; Isa Craig Knox, in her "Brides of Quair"; and, best of all, John Campbell Shairp, in verses first published in "Kilmahoe"—far the finest contribution to later Border poetry:

"Will ye gang wi' me and fare
To the Bush aboon Traquair?
Owre the high Minchmuir we'll up and awa',
This bonnie summer noon,
While the sun shines fair aboon,
And the licht sklents saftly doun on holm and ha'."

Dr. "Rab" Brown says he was fairly carried away by this lyric. "I like it more and more," he writes; "it has an unspeakable charm—the true pastoral melancholy of the region—and these long, satisfying lines, like the stride of a shepherd over the crown of Minchmoor. I would rather have been the man to write it than Gladstone in all his greatness and goodness." And again, pressingly, he writes: "My dear Poet, do let me send the 'Buss' to Thackeray. You will laugh at my inveteracy, but it haunts me like a vision." Strange how these two men should be almost better remembered by a single composition than for all their other literary efforts—the genial, tender-hearted Doctor for his "Rab," the buoyant, blithesome Principal for his "Bush." One is hardly surprised that Shairp should have confessed, "Now I feel as if I had lived, after all!" It may be interesting to remark that Burns visited the "Bush" in 1787, and found it to consist of "eight or nine ragged birches," but on that occasion the Muse does not seem to have inspired him.

Traquair abounds in legendary lore. A tradition, recounted in the notes to the "Queen's Wake," was responsible for Hogg's immortal "Kilmeny." No one questions the story of the Satyr Sykes—the spiriting away of the bonnie lass-bairn to Plora Wood, and the Fairy spell broken only through the fervent

LAIDLAW'S GRAVE



WILLIE LAIDLAW
(From a Sketch by Sir William Allan, in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery)

intercessions of seven neighbouring churches. Of Dr. John Brown's beloved Minchmoor, between Tweed and Yarrow, a monarch among hills, clustered o'er with memories, hallowed and unhallowed, how much might be said. Oh, the silence of noonday on its heathery top—the fearful loneliness—the acute sense of human littleness one feels amidst the mountain infinities, with the interminable stretch of sombre moorland, and the wind soughin' from the blind "hopes" away down to the green glens beneath! There is the path by which Montrose fled from fateful Philiphaugh, scurrying as fast as he could to Traquair. By the same road, Boyd, Earl of Arran, crossed Minchmoor to deliver James V.'s message to the Outlaw Murray—the Border "Robin Hood"—in his keep at Hangingshaw. Tales of buried treasure cling to Minchmoor, and its cool Cheese Well is a fairies' fount. From the Tweed to the Yarrow, by the broad brow of the memory-haunted height, is an ideal summer pilgrimage—and how Dr. John has described it! Let his "Minchmoor" be our guide thither. The solitariness of the old hill-path has been as profound and the air around it as pure and as bracing as they still are. But the wild, unhappy days of Border *sturm und drang* are over, and on the Tweed and Yarrow dales the spirit of a healthier rivalry has long settled. Surely, then, Traquair may well be styled the Parnassus of the Scott Country. Quaint Pennecuik is not far from the mark when he says:

> "On fair Tweedside, from Berwick to the Beild,
> Traquair, for beauty, fairly wins the field;
> So many charms by Nature and by Art
> Do there combine to captivate the heart
> And please the eye with what is fine and rare,
> Few other seats can match with sweet Traquair."

In the olden time Traquair was a much more important place than Innerleithen, its sister parish. Things are vastly altered. Traquair has dwindled to a hamlet, and the glory of its once royal residence has grown sadly dim, while Innerleithen, extending itself by leaps and bounds, is now a "burgh toun" and a flourishing commercial centre. What in Scott's day was only a straggling village thatched and whitewashed, with less than 600 inhabitants, has now a population of over 3,000. Here Scott is believed to have laid the scene of "St. Ronan's Well,"

published in 1823—his one story of contemporary social life. As Laidlaw, Scott, and Lockhart were riding along the brow of the triple-peaked Eildon Hills, Scott mentioned "the row" that was going on in Paris about "Quentin Durward." "I can't but think I could make better play still with something German," he said. Laidlaw grumbled at this: "You are always best, like Helen MacGregor, when your foot is on your native heath; and I have often thought that if you were to write a novel, and lay the scene *here* in the very year you were writing it, you would exceed yourself." "Hame's hame," quoth Scott, smiling, "be it ever sae hamely," and Laidlaw bade him "stick to Melrose in 1823." Laidlaw and Lockhart believed that this conversation suggested "St. Ronan's Well," the scene of which has been claimed as their own by the people of Innerleithen. This little town is beautifully situated where the hills of Tweed are steepest, and least resemble the *bosses verdâtres* of Prosper Mérimée. It is now a manufacturing town, like its neighbours, and contributes its quota to the pollution of the "glittering and resolute streams of Tweed." The pilgrim will scarce rival Tyrrel's feat of catching a clean-run salmon in summer, but the scenes are extremely pleasing, and, indeed, from this point to Dryburgh, the beautiful and fabled river is at its loveliest. Lockhart describes the prosperity which soon flowed into Innerleithen, and the St. Ronan's Games at which the Ettrick Shepherd presided gleefully. They are still held, but never will come again such another Shepherd, or such contests with the Flying Tailor of Ettrick. Innerleithen, anciently Hornehuntersland, first comes into notice about the year 1159, when a son of Malcolm the Maiden met his death by drowning in the Tweed, which circumstance probably survives in Droonpouch, a deep, dark pool near Leithenfoot. The rise of the woollen industry in 1790, and the discovery of the Doos' Well about the same time—by and by developed into the famous Spa—were the beginnings of the modern township. Shortly after the publication of Scott's romance, Innerleithen rose in repute as a popular watering-place, and it is still one of the most attractive places in Scotland.

CHAPTER XI

PICTURESQUE PEEBLES

MENTION of Peebles recalls the pet phrase of the district: "Peebles for pleasure." One is not surprised that the saying should have stuck to the trim, snug capital of Tweeddale, the ancient designation of the shire (revived by the County Council in 1929). The place has steadily grown in attractiveness, and is one of the neatest, most comfortable-looking towns on Tweedside. When royal Jamie penned his poem "Peblis to the Play," he had for theme the famous Beltane Festival, with all its flow of fun and frolic. It was the main event of the year at Peebles, no longer a religious celebration in honour of Baal the Sun-god, but a rustic holiday in which all manner of amusements, and a spirit of general good-fellowship, was the order of the day. Royalty favoured Peebles. From its proximity to the Border hunting-grounds, the Scottish Sovereigns frequently resorted hither, and charters by several of them are dated "from our town of Peebles." James I. especially gave his patronage to the place, and the May Day merry-making, we may be sure, had a singular fascination for the rhyming reveller:

"At Beltane, when ilk body bounds
To Peblis to the Play,
To hear the singing and the sounds
Their solace sooth to say;
By firth and forest forth they found,*
They graythit † them full gay;
God wait that wald they do that stound,‡
For it was their Feast day,
They said,
Of Peblis to the Play."

In "Christis Kirk on the Grene" the writer—probably also James I.—makes further allusion to the pleasurableness of Peebles:

* Went. † Dressed. ‡ Time.

" Was never in Scotland heard nor seen
Sic dancing nor deray ; *
Neither at Falkland on the grene
Nor Peblis at the Play."

Lord Cockburn's comparison " as quiet as the grave or as Peebles," is a witticism of the past. Following the Union of 1707, Peebles seems to have sunk into such another Sleepy Hollow as Washington Irving describes. But under modern conditions it has recovered its old vitality. Nor is the proverbial characteristic likely to be lost. The rise of the woollen industry, with many improvements in the town and neighbourhood, the erection of a hydropathic, the salubrious hill air, and the commendable cleanness of the place, all combine to render Peebles a popular commercial centre and country residence not easily equalled.

Delightfully placed on a peninsula at the junction of the Eddleston Water with the Tweed, in the bosom of the sculpturesque hills which hem it in, green-mantled, and heather or wood clad, the Tweed flanking its southern aspect, Peebles enjoys a charming natural situation. Around it will be found some of the prettiest scenery in the Lowlands, and the romantic and poetic associations are uniquely interesting. The wand of the Magician has touched some of its fairest nooks, making them classic for ever ; and over many another spot that might otherwise have remained unvisited and unknown, the halo of unforgotten days casts a storied glamour. Peebles, like Hawick, Jedburgh, Melrose, and other Border towns, derives its name from the Gadeni, or Romanized Britons, who pitched here, in those far-away times, their tents or " pebylls." A river promontory was a favourite settlement, chosen principally for purposes of protection. The original Peebles consisted of a few stockaded shielings set up in a clearing of the far-spreading Caledonian Forest. From this primitive condition it passed to the more permanent character of a twelfth-century township, when it appears on the page of authentic history. The earliest references are in connection with its ecclesiastical establishments, long in ruins. The first Christian sanctuary, in all likelihood was founded by St. Kentigern himself, followed by another to his

* Revelry.

B. C. Clayton

NEIDPATH CASTLE

INNERLEITHEN

memory many years afterwards. Mention is made of some such edifice as far back as 1116, but nothing remains of it. In 1195 a church, probably incorporated with Kentigern's, was dedicated to St. Andrew the Apostle. Of this only the tower and a fragmentary wall are left standing in the centre of the parish burying-ground.*

The tower was "restored" by Dr. William Chambers in 1883, and under its shadow he sleeps among his ancestors. A tablet in memory of his munificence is inserted in the eastern wall immediately above the doorway. St. Andrew's became in course of time a collegiate church, with twelve richly-endowed altars or prebends. In 1549 the English burned it, and, though partially renovated, it ceased at the Reformation to be the parish church. Tradition declares that Cromwell's dragoons converted the building into a stable during the operations against Neidpath in 1650. From 1560 to 1784 the Cross Kirk, or Kirk of the Holy Rood, the most important religious house in the shire, was the church of the parish. The chronicler John of Fordun, writing between the years 1384 and 1387, relates how in May, 1261, in the thirteenth year of King Alexander III., a stately and venerable cross was found at Peebles, in the presence of good men, priests, clerics, and burgesses.

"But it is quite unknown," he says, "in what year and by what persons it was hidden there. It is, however, believed that it was hidden by some of the faithful about the year of our Lord 296, while Maximian's persecution was raging in Britain. Not long after this a stone urn was discovered there, about three or four paces from the spot where that glorious cross had been found. It contained the ashes and bones of a man's body—torn limb from limb, as it were. Whose relics these are no one knows as yet. Some, however, think they are the relics of him whose name was found written on the very stone wherein that holy cross was lying. Now there was carved on that stone, outside, 'Tomb of the Bishop, Saint Nicholas.' Moreover, in the very spot where the cross was found, many a miracle was and is wrought by that cross; and the people poured and still pour thither in crowds, devoutly bringing their offerings and vows to God. Wherefore the King, by the advice of the Bishop of Glasgow, had a handsome church made there, to the honour of God and the Holy Cross."

* There is a theory that the ruins belong to a chapel in honour of the Virgin, erected by John of Pebyls in 1363; that the 1195 St. Andrew's stood to the east of the tower, and was destroyed by fire in 1406, after which event the name St. Andrew was transferred to the Chapel of the Virgin.

That this cross was regarded as part of the true Calvary Cross is apparent from an incident during James V.'s visit to Peebles in 1529. On that occasion the King bestowed a mark of his favour on the Cross Kirk, "quhair," it was said, "ane pairt of the verray Croce that our Salvatour was crucifyit on is honorit and kepit." The church rose to conventual dignity, accommodating seventy Red or Trinity Friars. Not wholly escaping the violence of the English invasions, or the later troubles of the Reformation, the building remained till 1784, when its walls were torn down and the stones used in the construction of the parish church, predecessor of the present edifice.

Neidpath, by some believed to be the castle of Peebles, may be considered the "lion" of the locality. There were several peels and bastle-houses in and around Peebles, but all have disappeared—

"Neidpath alone stands venerable and picturesque, on its rocky eminence, overlooking the winding Tweed. It is indeed a ruin, but a stately ruin. Its times of splendour and power have long since vanished, yet there is a silent majesty about it which commands respect. Time was when nobles, and even monarchs, entered its portals, and armed men were gathered within its walls; when its long avenue was lined by stately trees, and a forest of yews spread darkly around it; when its orchard on the hillside basked in the rays of the summer sun, and its garden was brilliant with flowers; when its well-defined terraces along the banks of the silvery stream formed the favourite promenade for the ladies and their attendant maids, and when a rude hospitality was dispensed in its halls." *

From Neidpath some of the finest views of Peebles and the Tweed are obtainable, recalling Pennecuik's lines:

"The noble Neidpath Peebles overlooks,
With its fair bridge, and Tweed's meandering crooks;
Upon a rock it proud and stately stands,
And to the fields about gives forth commands."

When or by whom Neidpath was built is unknown. When the light of history falls upon it, it was held by the Frisels or Frasers of Fruid and Oliver in Tweedsmuir. Sir Simon Fraser was the redoubtable hero of Roslin Moor in 1303. From the Frasers it passed by marriage to the Hays of Yester, Lords of Tweeddale, and by the poetic third Earl it was sold in 1686 to the

* "Glimpses of Peebles," by the Rev. Alexander Williamson, D.D., a native of the town.

Duke of Queensberry, who gifted it to his second son, the Earl of March, whose grandson, the dissolute "old Q," the fourth Duke, wrought the ruin of the estate. In 1795 he dismantled the magnificent old woods, the glory of the neighbourhood, "leaving the banks a shelterless wilderness," an act of spoliation scathingly stigmatized by Wordsworth in his "Sonnet composed at —— Castle":

"Degenerate Douglas! oh, the unworthy Lord!
Whom mere despite of heart could so far please,
And love of havoc (for with such disease
Fame taxes him), that he could send forth word
To level with the dust a noble horde,
A brotherhood of venerable trees,
Leaving an ancient dome and towers like these
Beggared and outraged! Many hearts deplored
The fate of those old trees; and oft with pain
The traveller at this day will stop and gaze
On wrongs, which Nature scarcely seems to heed;
For sheltered places, bosoms, nooks, and bays,
And the pure mountains, and the gentle Tweed,
And the green silent pastures yet remain." *

The passing years have done much to retrieve the result of that rash, contemptible deed. The Neidpath scenery is still of the fairest, and the number of walks by river-bank and hillside are hardly less attractive than under the glow of olden days.

Peebles has many pleasing literary associations. From the time of James I. to the present day the poetical succession has been continued. The "Thrie Tailes of the Thrie Priests of Peblis" is the work of a nameless sixteenth-century bard, possibly, as is suggested, the "gud, gentill Stobo" of Dunbar's "Lament." The third Earl of Tweeddale, when Lord Yester (1645–1713), struck the "key-note of Tweedside song" in a quaint lyric written at Neidpath:

"When Maggie and I were aquaint,
I carried my noddle fu' hie;
Nae lintwhite in a' the gay plain,
Nae gowdspink † sae bonnie as she!

* The Duke's motive was to spite the heir of entail—a distant relative. He did the same thing at Drumlanrig, and Burns's condemnation is even stronger than the Lake Poet's. Lockhart says, referring to Wordsworth's sonnet, that "few lines in the language were more frequently in Scott's mouth."

† Goldfinch.

I whistled, I piped, and I sang ;
I wooed, but I cam' nae great speed ;
Therefore I maun wander abroad,
And lay my banes far frae the Tweed.

" To Maggie my love did I tell,
My tears did my passion express ;
Alas ! for I lo'ed her ower well,
And the women lo'e sic a man less.
Her heart it was frozen and cauld ;
Her pride had my ruin decreed ;
Therefore I maun wander abroad,
And lay my banes far frae the Tweed."

Both Scott and Campbell have sung of the unhappy " Maid of Neidpath," spent with grief and disease, waiting her lover on the castle walls, and beholding him ride past all unconscious of her identity. Scott's ballad, of singular beauty, begins :

" O lovers' eyes are sharp to see,
And lovers' ears in hearing ;
And love, in life's extremity,
Can lend an hour of cheering.
Disease had been in Mary's bower,
And slow decay from mourning,
Though now she sits on Neidpath's tower
To watch her love's returning " ;

and, passing over two stanzas, ends thus :

" He came—he passed—a heedless gaze,
As o'er some stranger glancing ;
Her welcome, spoke in faltering phrase,
Lost in his courser's prancing—
The castle arch, whose hollow tone
Returns each whisper spoken,
Could scarcely catch the feeble moan
Which told her heart was broken."

In his notes to the poem Scott sets the scene of this incident at Peebles, in a house the most historic in the town. The property of the Cross Church, and residence of the Deans of Tweeddale, it came into the possession of the Hays, passing with the Neidpath estate to the Queensberry family, and, under the name of Queensberry Lodge, was the town house of the Earls of March. Here " Old Q " was born in 1725. In 1781 he sold the property to Provost Reid, from whose representative

PROFESSOR VEITCH

A. R. Edwards & Son

PEEBLES FROM ABOVE NEIDPATH CASTLE

it was bought by William Chambers in 1857, and at considerable cost remodelled and fitted up for purposes of social improvement, and presented as a free gift to the burgh. With a well-appointed Library, an interesting county Museum, an Art Gallery, and other accessories, the Chambers Institution deserves well of the public. Here is preserved Bunbury's picture, "Affliction," an insignificant brown print, memorable for its association with the only meeting between Burns and Scott in 1786, at the Edinburgh house of Professor Ferguson.*

William (b. 1800) and Robert Chambers (b. 1802), both Peebleans, from comparative poverty rose to fame and opulence as the most enterprising publishers of the time, pioneers of cheap, wholesome literature, and themselves able and patriotic litterateurs. Each became LL.D. William was Lord Provost of Edinburgh; restored St. Giles's Cathedral; had the chief share in a gigantic City Improvement Scheme; and shortly before his death received the offer of a baronetcy. Glenormiston, where he resided and wrote his "History of Peeblesshire," lies pleasantly between Peebles and Innerleithen. Of the two brothers, Robert was the more literary. He was on the most cordial terms with Scott, and many a happy hour they spent together. His books on Scottish subjects have done much to create interest in the history and literature of the country; and he was the author of some songs and old ballad imitations. He died in 1871. Almost next door to the Chambers's birthplace, in Biggiesknowe, was born in 1829 John Veitch, whose memory will not soon be forgotten. No man since Scott's day did so much for the Borders. It is not too much to style him "the latter-day Scott" and "the Scottish Wordsworth." Familiar with the story of the Scott Country in all its details by extensive reading and research, and from personal acquaintance with every nook and cranny, no one was better equipped to be its historian and interpreter. His work on the "History and Poetry of the Scottish Border" is the richest literary legacy since the publication of Scott's "Minstrelsy." No lover of Sir

* The old Cross of Peebles stood for many years in the quadrangle of the Institution, where is now the County War Memorial. In 1895 it was re-erected on its former site at the junction of the High Street, Eastgate, and Northgate. Peebles was a walled town, hence the frequency of the word "gate."

Walter or of his land can dispense with these enchanting volumes. They form the finest handbook to the Border, and without them it will be impossible to understand its many-sided history. Veitch's poetry—chiefly local—is full of the old Cymric fire, and a perusal of " Hillside Rhymes " and of " Tweed " or " Merlin " will only sharpen the appetite for the stronger food of the " History." Most of his philosophical work was done at Biggiesknowe, and at The Loaning, the home of his later years, where he died September 3, 1894. A plain, unpretentious cross—characteristic of the man—marks his resting-place by the tower of old St. Andrew's. A Memorial Fountain stands in the High Street, and in his favourite Manor Valley kindly hands erected a Veitch Cairn, while Glasgow University emblazoned in bronze his gifts as student and Professor. Another notable figure in the philosophical world was born at Peebles in 1830—Professor Henry Calderwood—whose varied powers as preacher, educationist, politician, were ungrudgingly devoted to the well-being of the community. Calderwood had a real love for the spot of his nativity, and the record of his farewell visit is the most touching passage in his Biography:

" He comes to gaze once more upon the scenes of his boyhood. His heart has lost none of its constancy. He loves the old haunts still. The scene is full of tenderness and pathos. When he came in sight of Tweed Bridge and Cademuir he said: ' It is such a delight to come back to the hills of one's youth ' ; and for two hours he wandered round the outskirts, reviving memories of the olden times. In the afternoon he said: ' I want to visit the churchyard, and see the graves of my people.' I can see him now, standing with bared head, reading the names that are inscribed upon the tombstones. Then, when he had finished, ' Take me,' he said, ' to Professor Veitch's grave.' On the stone he read, ' John Veitch.' There was a fresh cross of flowers lying. It had been laid there that day by loving hands. He stood and repeated it once and again, ' John Veitch ! John Veitch ! How simple ! But death simplifies all things. Now I want to see the autumn tints on the Neidpath woods,' he said; and thither we went, he resting several times on the brae to take a breath. At the top he looked long at the golden hues of the dying foliage, but not a word did he speak."

Calderwood died November 19, 1897. The house in which he was born is on the north side of the High Street, and may be identified from a curiously carved stone in front with the words " God provides a rich inheritans, 1717, W.T." Thomas

Smibert was the poet-physician of Peebles. Hardly anything finer than his "Scottish Widow's Lament" has been penned—one of the truest and most pathetic pictures of that simple life of joy and sorrow which we may meet with any day in the Tweedside glens. Only the opening verse can be quoted here:

"Afore the Lammas tide
Had dun'd the birken-tree,
In a' our water-side
Nae wife was blest like me;
A kind gudeman, and twa
Sweet bairns were round me here,
But they're a' ta'en awa'
Sin' the fa' o' the year."

Dr. Pennecuik of Romanno was another member of the rhyming craft. His "Description of Tweeddale" is a mine of curious and minute information. Mungo Park practised as a surgeon in Peebles for three years, and was a prototype in part of Gideon Gray in the "Surgeon's Daughter." The house in which he resided is in the Northgate, and a tablet marks the site of his surgery, a few doors east from the Chambers Institution. The inimitable "Meg Dods of the Cleikum Inn" at St. Ronan's, Scott's "landlady of the olden world," found her Original in Miss Ritchie of the Cross Keys, once town-house of the Cardrona Williamsons, erected in 1653. The then new Tontine, the "hotle" of which Meg always spoke with scorn, stands in the High Street. Wordsworth visited Peebles in 1803, and Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal is full of kindliest recollections of the place and people. "The Tweed," she says, "is a name which has been sweet to my ears almost as far back as I can remember anything. All that we saw, and felt, and heard, combined to excite our sensation of pensive and still pleasure." Alexander Smith wrote within St. Mary's Mount a dozen or so characteristic verses in praise of Tweed:

"And all through the summer morning
I felt it a joy indeed
To whisper again and again to myself,
This is the voice of the Tweed."

Scott made frequent visits to Peebles and Neidpath "He spoke [to the Wordsworths] of cheerful days he had spent in

that castle not many years ago when it was inhabited by Professor Ferguson and his family." From Neidpath the Professor removed to Hallyards in Manor, and in July, 1797, when on their way to the English Lake district, Scott and his brother John were entertained at Hallyards. There are few glens more romantic than Manor. Long before Scott cast the witchery of his genius around this "sweetest vale of all the South," it was filled with a host of historic memories. The spirit of the past seems to brood over it. One might almost expect to meet the ghost forms of its departed still haunting their pastoral solitudes. From Manor, Scott drew inspiration for the first of the "Tales of my Landlord," published sixteen years after his visit. It was on the occasion of his Hallyards holiday that he had that terribly weird interview with David Ritchie, when even Scott, strong, fearless man as he was, became pale as ashes, and his person was agitated in every limb. A character so extraordinary, or circumstances so uncanny, were not to be forgotten, and by and by "Bowed Davie," who had sought the seclusion of Manor in which to hide his deformity, became known to undreamt-of multitudes as "Elshender the Recluse," and the "Black Dwarf" of Mucklestane Moor. Born at Easter Happrew, in Stobo, in 1740, he received practically no education, and was sent to learn the trade of brush-making at Edinburgh, where his poor, distorted figure, huge misshapen feet, legs like a pair of corkscrews, and features ogreish in their preternatural ugliness, a low, receding forehead, deep-set black eyes, a long, sharp nose almost meeting his far-projecting chin, made him a butt for the bitterest caricature. Disappointed, grieved, broken in temper, a wretched misanthrope, he returned to his native glens, where the remainder of his lonely life was passed. Notwithstanding its hard conditions, and the lack of opportunity for self-improvement, he could read history and appreciate the epics of Milton and Shenstone's Pastorals. He gloried in Allan Ramsay, but hated Burns. An ardent Nature-lover, with a well-flowered garden, a bee-skep or two, a cat, a dog, and a goat of which he was passionately fond, David the Solitary of Manor was not without some of the best human traits and a "twinkle" at least, as Veitch puts it, of the divine. His self-built hut of turf and stones lasted till 1802, when a more substantial structure

was set up by the kindly laird. It is this which is the chief shrine of Manor—slated now and altered somewhat, yet practically the identical house which he inhabited for nine years. His grave is in Manor Kirkyard, and a plain, neat stone proclaims to the passer-by his name and immortal title: "In Memory of David Ritchie, the original of the 'Black Dwarf.' Died 1811. Erected by W. and R. Chambers, 1845." *

Manor had no fewer than ten peel-towers or keeps. Only one is in good preservation—Barns, for close on 500 years the abode of the Burnets, around which John Buchan has woven his stirring Tweedside romance, "John Burnet of Barns." Posso, an ancient Naesmyth heritage, was celebrated for its falcons, and in the "Bride of Lammermoor" Henry Ashton gets his hawks from "an eyry, all the way at Posso," an allusion traceable to Scott's visit to Manor. St. Gordian's † Cross—"To the dead in Christ, who sleep in God's acre, St. Gordian's Kirk, in peace"—further up the valley, near the junction of Newholm Hope Burn with the Manor, is thought to mark the site of the ancient kirk of the parish.

* Probably the best account of the historical Dwarf, and of his hardly less remarkable sister, is that given by Robert Chambers in "Illustrations of the Author of Waverley." Professor Veitch's sketch in "Border Essays" should also be read. Chapter XVI. of the novel reproduces with graphic force Scott's own interview of 1797. See also "The Scott Originals," pp. 143–161.

† St. Gordian was a Roman Christian of the fourth century, whose name became connected at a very early period with the Manor Valley.

CHAPTER XII

THE TWEED UPLANDS

THE Scott Country is synonymous with the Vale of the Tweed. From its source in the Peeblesshire uplands till it touches the sea at Berwick—a little over a hundred miles—the Tweed with its tributaries drain all the Scottish Border. For wealth of romance combined with pre-eminent and varied natural beauty the Tweed is without rival among Scottish streams. Around the hills that guard its source and in its first twenty miles or so, the romantic associations of the river are exceedingly striking. So far as this element is concerned, the uplands are perhaps richer and stronger than either the middle or lower reaches. Doubtless the seclusion by which the springs of the Tweed have been so long hemmed in from the outer world, and the consequent primitiveness of the locality, have helped to preserve to a much later period many a memory that would have perished in a more prosaic environment. Some of the oldest Scottish traditions linger around the Tweed uplands in all their native purity, and are retold to-day as they must have been centuries ago. It is a regret that Scott, who was familiar with Tweedside from source to sea, did not draw, as he might have done, in fuller measure from a storehouse so deep and overflowing.

The Tweed takes its rise far up among the Southern Highlands in the same range of hills which give birth to the Annan and the Clyde :

> " Annan, Tweed, and Clyde,
> Rise a' out o' ae hillside."

An ideal spot, wrapped in the wildness of uncultivated Nature, with nothing to disturb its sweet pastoral simplicity, one can scarcely imagine a scene more peaceful, and more soothing to the human spirit. The nearest village—a mere clachan—is distant more than an hour's walk. How profound and " awesome " is the solitude of the hill country ! and yet, constantly

floating across the wide expanse of moorland, there seems to come the music of many mysterious sounds—

> " The undefined and mingled hum,
> Voice of the desert never dumb."

To him with open eye and ear, there will be, in spite of the upland " melancholy," as Wordsworth calls it, some of the fairest Nature-visions and symphonies the most rapturous.

> " Thou dost teach by solitude of glens,
> And wonders of the sky, the shepherd lad
> Who ever haunts thy hills, till in him grows
> The deep-impassioned heart, and in quaint phrase
> He graphic sets both what he sees and feels—
> Sometimes in awe, sometimes in stirring love—
> Of daily wonders all around his path,
> Not for him wonders, rather daily food,
> Unconscious nurture of the inner soul
> That gropes amid sense-visions for its God ! "

From a small space of meadowland sentinelled by Dr. " Rab " Brown's " great round-backed, kindly, solemn hills," and glistening like a bright eye among the surrounding greenery, Tweed first catches the light of day. A lonely Well—caller, clear, inspiring—" without shelter of wall or tree, open to the sun and all the winds, ever the same, self-contained, all-sufficient ; needing no outward help from stream or shower, but fed from its own unseen, unfailing spring," is the fountain-head of the silver Tweed, Sir Walter's favourite river—to him enchanting, and by him enchanted. Should not Tweed's Well be described as the Scottish Castalia ? May it not also have a portion of the Parnassian gift ? No other spot has quite the same claim. What a halo of romance hangs over it !

> " And all through the stretch of the stream,
> To the lap of Berwick Bay,"

was there ever such flood-tide of song or such power of " gramarye " ?

Tweed's Well is the centre of many interesting associations. Here flourished the ancient Forest of Caledon with its thousand birks and hazels. Through its wilds have wandered such dimly-historic figures as Merlin, the weird, half-crazed Minstrel of Upper Tweeddale—

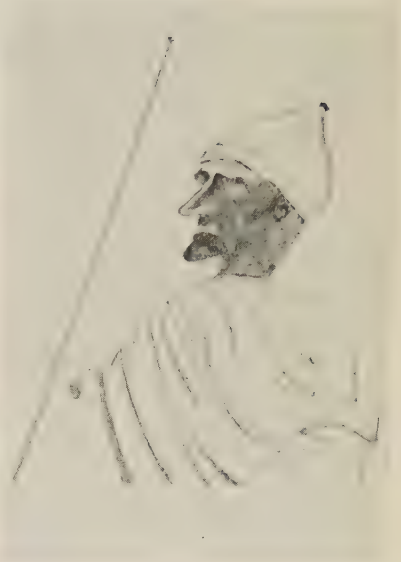
" Left to dark soul frenzy, fled
Far from the dreaded field of Arderydd,
He knew not where, nor recked, and he was found
Lone haunter of the Wood of Caledon " :

Taliessin, Bard of the White Brow (whence probably we have the name Talla) ; Kentigern or Mungo, Apostle of Strathclyde, who introduced Christianity to the Tweed Valley ; and after him, with ceaseless missionary effort, Cuthbert, best known of the Border Saints. Other forms, shadow-like, pass before us—Gwenddoleu, Prince of the pagan Cymri, defending his ancestral Druidism against the Christian Rydderch Hael, the victor in a great fight for the new faith at Arderydd on the Liddel ; and mystic Arthur himself, " of fresh aventours dreaming." It is believed that the " Wizard " Michael Scot was a native of the Tweed uplands, and legends of his doings are still told in the district.* Here, too, at a later date, the good Lord James Douglas swore fealty to Bruce bound for Scone. Tweed's Cross was a favourite wayside shrine —a holy place—consecrated, like the fountain close by, to the memory of the first Gospel messenger on Tweedside, while it is fairly certain that this Well-eye among the hills was the " fons Merlini " haunted by the sad-souled Seer, where Kentigern met and conversed with him, and heard his confession, and when Merlin, bidding farewell to his old Nature-worship, entered the Christian fold. The Scottish Sovereigns, from the time of Kenneth the Grim to Queen Mary and James VI., held many a gala-day in the Tweed uplands on the occasion of their great hunting expeditions. Kenneth's love for " bonnie Bertha of Badlieu," rousing the jealousy of his Queen, and ending in the murder of the forest maiden, is one of our earliest-known legends. Covenant memories cling to Tweedhopefoot and Tweedshaws, and by Corehead and the Devil's Beef-tub on the Annan side of the watershed. And readers of Dr. Brown's " Enterkin " will remember the touching reference to the tragedy of 1831, when both guard and driver of the Moffat mail-coach perished in one of the wildest snow-storms that ever raged on the Tweedsmuir heights.

Some seven miles from the " Well " we touch the hamlet of Tweedsmuir, its kirk spire showing out clear against the sky-line. Here Chalmers and Guthrie occasionally preached, and many memories cling to the bonnie green knowe between Tweed and

* See J. Wood Brown's " Life and Legend of Michael Scot," 1897.

THE BLACK DWARF'S COTTAGE *Page 104*



THE BLACK DWARF
(*From a contemporary sketch*)

Talla, where sleep countless generations of "the Muir." "Scarcely a sweeter spot could be found," says Jean L. Watson, "than this churchyard. In their lives these silent ones dwelt amidst the wild and lone, and here still they rest without fear of disturbance, and their requiem is the wind whistling through the glen or the song of the birds of the moorland."

There is John Hunter's grave with the stone relettered by "Old Mortality."

HERE LYES JOHN HUNTER
MARTYR WHO WAS CRUELY
MURDERED AT COREHEAD
BY COL : JAMES DOUGLAS AND
HIS PARTY FOR HIS ADHERENCE
TO THE WORD OF GOD AND
SCOTLAND'S COVENANTED
WORK OF REFORMATION
1685.

Erected in the year 1726.

"John Hunter, a Tweedmoor lad, was accidentally visiting a sick friend at Corehead when timely in the morning he was surprised with Douglas and his dragoons. He fled to the hill a great way, but one named Scott, being well horsed, compassed him and came before him. He was most barbarouslie shot through the body, felled on the head with the neck of a gun, and casten headlong over a high steep craig." *—*Contemporary Record.*

"When Zion's King was Robbed
of his right
His witnesses in Scotland put to
flight
When popish prelats and Indul-
gancie
Combin'd 'gainst Christ to Ruine
Presbytrie
All who would not unto their
idols bow
They socht them out and whom
they found they slew
For owning of Christ's cause I
then did die
My blood for vengeance on his
en'mies did cry."

And many another hero of the Covenant is at rest in this upland God's acre. How quaintly touching the lines on this stone :

"Death pities not the aged head,
Nor manhood fresh and green,
But blends the locks of eighty-five
With ringlets of sixteen ;"

or on that other :

"Whate'er could die of William Ker
Lies quietly in earth's bosom here ;

* Added in 1910 on a fresh Memorial over the grave. The old stone still stands. The Record was derived from the Wodrow Manuscripts in the National Library of Scotland.

His better part, with heirs of grace,
We hope now dwells in heavenly place.
This hopeful youth at fifteen years
Left all his friends bedewed in tears.
The objects of God's dearest love
Are called, when young, to joys above;
How pious, modest, and sincere,
The coming judgment will declare."

Tweedsmuir is a parish of the Covenant. Here are some entries from the Session Records: "No session kept by reason of the elders being all at conventicles." "No public sermon, soldiers being sent to apprehend the minister, but he, receiving notification of their design, went away and retired." "No meeting this day for fear of the enemy." "The collection this day to be given to a man for acting as watch during the time of sermon." "There was no sermon, the ministers not daring to stay at their charges" Talla Linns recalls the "meeting" mentioned in chapter xviii. of the "Heart of Midlothian," where Scott makes Douce Davie Deans a silent but much-impressed spectator. "The place was remarkably well adapted for such an assembly. It was a wild and very sequestered dell in Tweeddale, surrounded by high hills, and far remote from human habitation. A small river, or rather a mountain torrent, called the Talla breaks down the glen with great fury, dashing successively over a number of small cascades, which has procured the spot the name of Talla Linns. Here the leaders among the scattered adherents of the Covenant, men who, in their banishment from human society, and in the recollection of the severities to which they had been exposed, had become at once sullen in their tempers and fantastic in their religious opinions, met with arms in their hands, and by the side of the torrent discussed, with a turbulence which the noise of the stream could not drown, points of controversy as empty and unsubstantial as its form." Alexander and Michael Shields, Peden the Prophet, James Renwick, and others, have "conventicled" amid the wild recesses of the Talla and the dark bouldery glen of Gameshope, the most picturesque in Peeblesshire, where also Donald's Cleuch probably preserves association with Cargill, the "outed" minister of the Glasgow Barony. "It will be a bloody night in Gemsop this," is the opening sentence of James Hogg's "Brownie of Bodsbeck."

Of the Beild, the birthplace of Dr. John Ker, the most gifted preacher of his denomination, and The Crook Inn, some good Covenant stories are handed down. There was the landlady of The Crook, who built up a hunted hillman in her peat-stack, and the parish abounds in traditions of similar hair-breadth escapes. Chambers's story, " Neil Maclaren," is founded on a well-known Crook incident, and Hamilton Paul's witty effusion " Jeanie o' The Crook," is always a favourite. At The Crook the famous Bishop Forbes put up during one of his itineraries. Lord Cockburn rested here on Circuit and other journeys, and has described Tweedsmuir Church as the " most prettily situated in Scotland." Burns and Thomas Campbell were familiar with the district. The former baited frequently at the Beild, while of the latter, one of Dr. John Brown's " Enterkin " stories will bear repeating. " Campbell, in his young days, had walked up as far as the Beild [probably from Broughton Manse, the home of his college friend, Hamilton Paul], and had got snug into bed after his tumbler of toddy, when there was a knock at the door. ' Come in ! ' and behold, with a candle in her hand, stood the pretty maiden who had given him his supper, in her short-gown and petticoat. ' Please, sir, could ye tak' a neebor into yer bed ? ' ' With all my heart,' said the imaginative, susceptible poet, starting gaily up. ' Thank ye, sir, for the Moffat carrier's just come in a' wat, and there's no a single ither place.' Up came the huge and reeking man ; exit the dainty little woman." Scott passed through Tweedsmuir in 1797, and again with Skene during the Ashestiel years. Christopher North extols the place in his " Streams " essay, and here the Ettrick Shepherd was his occasional companion. Russel of the *Scotsman*, Shairp, Knight (who spent his honeymoon here), Blackie, Veitch, Lang, are well-known names on Upper Tweedside. The closing chapters of William Black's " Strange Adventures of a Phaeton " contain a graphic description of the scenery between Moffat and Broughton, and of a night at The Crook ; * and " John Strathesk " drew from the parish not a few of his delightful delineations of Scottish peasant life.

The site of the ancient Castle of Oliver, on a hill opposite the

* Andrew Lang thought that The Crook possibly suggested to Scott the " Cleikum Inn " of St. Ronan's.

church to the left of the Tweed, is the most historic landmark in the locality. Built by Oliver Fraser in the reign of David I., it must have been a strongly fortified place—" grim guardian of the Upper Tweed." It was the most remote of a chain of fortalices placed at intervals on alternate sides of the river all the way from the Beild to Berwick, each within view of the next. Some of those towers were held by the Crown, others by the barons, but all were raised for the defence of the country in those hazardous days. They served a twofold purpose, being used as local strongholds and as beacon-posts, communicating not only with each other, but with similar peel-houses in lateral glens. A signal-fire on any of them was promptly answered by signal-fires on all; and the flame by night or the smoke by day summoned the whole fighting population to arms. Hence the reference in the " Lay " :

" a score of fires, I ween,
From height, and hill, and cliff were seen ;
Each with warlike tidings fraught ;
Each from each the signal caught ;
Each after each they glanced to sight
As stars arise upon the night ;
They gleamed on many a dusky tarn,
Haunted by the lonely earn ;
On many a cairn's gray pyramid
Where urns of mighty chiefs lie hid."

The Frasers were the most powerful barons in Peeblesshire. As Sheriffs of Tweeddale and holders of vast territorial possessions, they had full scope in the affairs of the time. The most notable bearer of the name was the hero of Roslin—Sir Simon, the friend of Wallace, whom he often entertained and sheltered in his eyry by the Tweed. In 1306, falling into the hands of the English, the year following the cruel fate of his companion-in-arms, Fraser was executed in London—" his head smyten off and placed upon London brig on a sper."

Polmood is the next spot of note in the neighbourhood. A hunting-lodge of the Scottish Kings, held by the Hunter family from time immemorial, the estate was the subject of one of the most lengthened litigations on record.* Here Hogg laid the

* Adam Hunter, tenant in Altarstone, Stobo, was undoubtedly the heir to Polmood, and was so served by a Peebles jury in 1802, but the case was referred to the Court of Session, and, dragging on its weary course for fully forty years, ended unfavourably for the claimant.

ST. GORDIAN'S CROSS *Page 105*

TWEEDSMUIR

scene of his "Bridal of Polmood," and with the Logan Lea and Mossfennan, a few miles further down the river, it has been the theme of some spirited old ballads :

"There cam' three wooers out o' the West,
Booted and spurred as ye weel micht see,
And they lichted a' at Mossfennan Yett,
A little below the Logan Lea.

The Logan Lea recalls Linkumdoddie, an extinct weaving hamlet, whose site is indicated by a commemorative slab and a wayside sign-post. Everybody has heard of Burns's "Willie Wastle" and his unattractive spouse :

"Willie Wastle dwalt on Tweed,
The spot they ca'ed it Linkumdoddie ;
Willie was a wabster guid,
Could stown a clue wi' ony bodie ;
He had a wife was dour and din,
O, tinkler Maidgie was her mither—
Sic a wife as Willie had,
I wadna gie a button for her ! "

There is the Logan Water dancing its way to the Tweed, and of the wabster's wife Burns sang that "her face wad fyle the Logan Water." Yonder is Kingledores, to the left of Linkumdoddie, with memories of St. Cuthbert and the hermit Cristin ; while on the right, at the mouth of the sweetest of green glens, nestles Stanhope, long the home of the Jacobite Murrays.* Mossfennan, dating as far back as the reign of Alexander II., is shortly afterwards reached, and one of the finest landscapes in the Tweed uplands stretches out in front. Here the valley widens and opens up, and the river takes a sudden bend eastwards. High overhead rises the shapely Rachan Hill crowned with firs and whin, and away down beneath, within a stone-cast of the stream, "dismantled Drumelzier" sits on its rocky knoll—the ghost of its former self, when like a king it ruled and struck terror to the heart

* Sir David Murray lost his all through the '45. His estates were forfeited, and he died abroad. His uncle, John Murray of Broughton—better known as "Evidence" Murray—was the Prince's secretary. After Culloden, he was concealed for a time in the Broughton district, but was discovered at Polmood, the house of his brother-in-law, in June, 1746. To save his life, he turned King's evidence. He died in France in 1777. See the incident of "Broughton's Saucer" in Lockhart's "Life"—"Neither lip of me nor mine comes after Mr. Murray of Broughton's."

of Tweedside. Now all is hushed and still where once broke loose "the devouring dogs of war":

> "On the roofless tower
> For banner there waves the pale wall-flower;
> And for sound of the trumpet, and roll of the drum,
> Comes the shriek of the owl on the night-wind borne;
> And the turrets are fallen, the vaults are flown,
> And the bat rules the halls they called their own."

Here dwelt the Tweedies in their day of might. In the Introduction to the "Betrothed," Scott gives the origin of this once powerful clan—how the first of the name was the son of the water-spirit, "the genius of the Tweed," whose abode was the deep, dark Debbit Pool by the Castle walls. For this early Scottish legend there are several classical parallels. In the "Odyssey" we have the tradition of the beautiful nymph Tyro, enamoured of the Enipeus and beguiled by Poseidon, in the shape of the river-god, and Diocles, son of Orsilochus, was the child begotten of Alpheus. By-and-by the Tweedies became the most influential family in the Upper Tweed Valley. Their names are found in the history of every barony. Through conquest, trickery, and intermarriage, they girt themselves about with strength and territory. They were a bold, troublesome, tyrannical, red-handed race, holding with an iron grip families less capable of resistance, and inflicting the most shameless servitude on their vassals. Their coat of arms, a black bull's head with the motto "Thole and Think," was in no way characteristic of the clan. "To thole" was not in their nature, and their "thinking" had always a large enough element of self behind it. They came to a sad finis—the last of the Drumelzier line being found in 1628 a broken-down man in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, where he had been consigned by his cousin and remorseless creditor, Lord Hay of Yester, into whose family the lands had passed. Tinnis, or the Thane's Castle, whose ruins are seen jutting out from the pyramidal hillside—a singularly secure position at the height of its glory, comparable to a robber's fortress on the Rhine—was probably built in the twelfth century, and held by the Tweedies and their retainers. This is believed to be the scene of Ossian's poem "Calthon and Colmal." The Teutha is the Tweed, and Dunthalmo's town, Drumelzier.

MERLIN'S GRAVE

STOBO KIRK

Near Drumelzier Kirk, at the junction of Tweed and Powsail, the traditional grave of Merlin is pointed out. Bower's "Scotichronicon" narrates the circumstances of his death: "On the same day which he foretold he met his death; for certain shepherds of a chief of the country called Meldred set upon him with stones and staves, and, stumbling in his agony, he fell from a high bank of the Tweed, near the town of Drumelzier (*i.e.*, the ridge of Meldred), upon a sharp stake which the fishers had placed in the waters, and which pierced his body through. He was buried near the spot where he expired."

"Ah! well he lov'd the Powsail Burn;
Ah! well he lov'd the Powsail Glen;
And there, beside his fountain clear,
He sooth'd the frenzy of his brain.

"For no one ever lov'd the Tweed,
Who was not lov'd by it in turn;
It smil'd in gentle Merlin's face,
It soughs in sorrow round his bourn."

A prophecy of Thomas the Rhymer—

"When Tweed and Pausayl meet at Merlin's grave,
England and Scotland shall one monarch have,"

is said to have been fulfilled on the very day when James VI. was crowned King of the united realms.

Passing down the Tweed, the Dawyck woods attract attention. Here the first chestnuts and larches were introduced into Britain. The barony was long the seat of the Veitches and the Naesmyths, of which family were Sir James the botanist, a pupil of Linnæus, and James the engineer. Some of the most picturesque reaches of the Tweed are by Dawyck and Stobo. Stobo Castle, of bold, Norman architecture, is on a height above the river commanding a charming range of hill-country, heather-tinted and unusually rich in woodland beauty. Stobo Kirk, founded by St. Mungo, was probably the earliest ecclesiastical structure in Tweeddale. The Saint's Cell and Chapel were restored in 1929. It was the plebania, or mother-church, of the district. From it sprang all the neighbouring parishes, and its priest, as Prebend or Dean both of Clydesdale and Tweeddale, held high rank among the early clergy. The building is a mixture of Saxon and Norman, in

three parts—tower, nave, and chancel—and has been the work of different periods. A set of "jougs" hangs by the porch. Sir John Reid, of Stobo, is believed to be the "gud, gentill Stobo" of Dunbar's "Lament for the Makaris." Within the churchyard Robert Hogg, nephew of the Ettrick Shepherd, was buried in 1834. A lad of undoubted "pairts," had he survived—he was only thirty-two when he died—he would almost certainly have taken a high place in literature. One of the finest ballads in his uncle's "Mountain Bard"—the "Tweeddale Raide," full of dramatic ring and verve—is from his pen, and some of his smaller lyrics, cast in a finely poetic mould, are evidences of his genius. When a press reader with the Ballantynes, Robert Hogg came into frequent touch with Scott, and wrote from his dictation large portions of the "Life of Napoleon," and for a time he acted as Lockhart's secretary while conducting the *Quarterly Review*. (See "Life of Scott," vol. ix.)

At Happrew, in the neighbourhood, Wallace is said to have suffered defeat from the English in 1304. The Sheriffmuir Standing Stones near by, at the junction of the Lyne and the Tweed, probably commemorate some Cymric chief, while the plain itself derives its name from having been the place appointed by the Sheriffs for the famous Tweeddale "Wapinschaws" a couple of centuries ago. One of the most perfect specimens of a Roman Camp is in the Lyne Valley, not far from the Kirk of Lyne. It has been explored, and will well repay a visit. On a height overlooking the Tarth and Lyne stands the massive pile of Drochil—"that remarkable edifice," as Lockhart styles it. In July, 1831, Scott was within sight of "Drochil's mouldering walls," and could scarcely be restrained from making some effort to reach it. He was on his way to Douglasdale, the scene of "Castle Dangerous," the last of his romances, and his mind ran naturally on the story of the Douglases. Around Drochil lingered the memory of a strong scion of the race whose name was writ large on the page of history. This was James, fourth Earl of Morton, the despotic Regent of James VI.'s minority. In the quiet glen of the Lyne he had hoped to pass the remainder of his days, free from the cares, and the snares also, of State. But Drochil, "designed," as Pennecuik has it, "more for a palace than a castle of defence," was destined to remain uncompleted and uninhabited—

" A home ne'er roofed, or warmed by hearthfire glow,
Or raying forth upon the cheerless night
A kindly light set by a human hand."

In 1581, for his alleged complicity in the murder of Darnley, Morton perished at the Cross of Edinburgh on the " Maiden," the instrument he himself introduced to Scotland—a kind of guillotine—still to be seen in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries. It was this Morton who pronounced over Knox's grave the memorable words, " Here lies one who never feared the face of man." He was a good Regent in spite of many questionable qualities. Ambition and avarice were his besetting sins, and he was somewhat merciless and cruel. Drochil remains a memorial both of the pride which ruled, and of the sudden fall which closed a great career—

" The symbol of a baffled earthly hope,
And of a broken life uncrowned by fame."

CHAPTER XIII

THE MAKING OF ABBOTSFORD

ONE hundred and twenty years ago Abbotsford was taking shape in the brain of the dreamer at Ashestiel. Before him rose the stately mansion and the line of successors who were to be called by his name. The height of Scott's ambition was to blossom into a Border laird and to become the founder of a distinct branch of the great Border family of Scott. Let us not judge him too harshly, as some have done, if he allowed his dream to carry him away, or if he centred his thoughts too extravagantly on the pride of birth and state. Scott was human, and, like many another, he was uplifted by the phenomenal success which had come to him, and he must have been conscious of vaster powers yet to be disclosed. But it was his besetting temptation, and he paid dearly enough for its mastery of him, even if it brought him a reputation he might not otherwise have won, and a test of heroism as few men have been called to face.

Some time during the boyhood of Scott he saw the site of the future Abbotsford. Driving one day with his father from Selkirk to Melrose, Lockhart tells how the old man suddenly desired the carriage to halt at the foot of an eminence, and said: "We must get out here, Walter, and see a thing quite in your line." His father then conducted him to a rude stone on the edge of an acclivity on the lands of Kaeside, about half a mile from the place where Abbotsford now stands, which marks the spot where

> "gallant Cessford's heart-blood dear
> Reeked on dark Elliot's Border spear."

Here, on July 25, 1526, had been fought one of those fierce, sanguinary fights between rival clans which were constantly occurring within the lawless bounds of the Border. It was the last great clan battle on the Borders. The Scotts, with Buccleuch at their head, were pitted against the Douglases and the Kers, led by Archibald, Earl of Angus, and Sir Andrew Ker of

JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART

ABBOTSFORD IN 1812

Cessford, and Ferniherst, chief of the Border Kers. The object of contention was the person of the boy-King, James V., then in his sixteenth year, who is said to have watched the struggle from a neighbouring knoll. The day fared badly for both sides, but in the end Angus's party triumphed at the expense of many followers, with the Laird of Cessford himself left dead upon the field. According to Pitscottie, Buccleuch and his friends fled in utter rout from the combat, chased by Cessford, " who followed so seriously till at the foot of a path he was slain by a spear by one Elliot, a servant of the Laird of Buccleuch. When Cessford was slain the chase ceased, and Angus returned again with great merriness and victory, and thanked God that He saved him from that shame, and passed with the King to Melrose, where they remained all that night." Memories of such a fight were sure to cling to spots in the locality. Hence we have Skirmish Hill or Field—corrupted into Skinner's Hill—where the battle was fought, now the site of the Waverley Hydropathic Establishment ; Charge Law, where Buccleuch drew up his men for the onset ; and Turn-Again, where the defeated party rallied and the conquerors turned from the pursuit after Cessford's death. This was the place where Scott and his father rested that summer day in the midst of scenes full of historic interest, and by-and-by the centre of associations deeper and further-reaching. The surroundings then, and for years afterwards, were bald and bare in the extreme. Nature had received none of those touches which have resulted in the modern picturesqueness of the place, yet the naked hills and the sweet stretch of haughland by the Tweed had their own particular charm, and the boy Scott had learned to love Tweedside, and for him then, as through all his later life, there was no land like the Borders.

Accordingly we find him, in 1811, negotiating for the purchase of the little farm property of Cartleyhole, on the south bank of the Tweed, some two miles from Galashiels, then a small weaving village, and about three from Melrose. Cartleyhole—in the Melrose Session Records Cartlawhole and Cartlihole—belonged to Walter Turnbull, parish schoolmaster of Melrose, who had married into the family of its former owner, Dickson, a portioner of the town. In 1797 he disposed of it to Dr. Robert Douglas, minister of Galashiels, who in turn sold it to Scott, on the eve of

quitting Ashestiel. The place had been in the doctor's hands for fourteen years, but he had never lived there, and it was in a deplorably neglected condition. For a time it seems to have been tenanted and under cultivation, but at Scott's purchase so utterly unattractive was it and tumble-down-looking, that the neighbours had christened it by the more characteristic name of Clarty Hole. The house was poor and small, the steading inadequate, and the drainage defective. Dykes and fences had all but disappeared. Heather grew close to the doorway, and a filthy, evil-smelling duck-pond lay in front, an eyesore and more to all who passed by. There was, in short, nothing attractive about the spot, and a stranger might well have hesitated before driving his bargain. But Scott had gauged its compensating elements and the possibilities of the place. With the silver bend of the Tweed immediately in the foreground, the bold triple height of Eildon behind, and the near presence of so many objects of interest, he felt that something could be made out of it. Melrose and Selkirk were close at hand, and the Ettrick and Yarrow glens. He was interested in the Catrail, the ancient Pictish earthwork which was plainly visible on the rising ground across the river—a bone of contention to all the archæologists. A Roman road ran from the Eildons to a ford on the Tweed, by which the Abbots were wont to cross. Thus everything to Scott's prophetic eye betokened an ideal spot for the fulfilling of his day-dream.

On May 12, 1811, we find him writing to James Ballantyne: "I have resolved to purchase a piece of ground sufficient for a cottage and a few fields. There are two pieces, either of which would suit me, but both would make a very desirable property indeed, and could be had for between £7,000 and £8,000, or either separate for about half the sum. I have serious thoughts of one or both." Three months later one of the pieces passed into his hands for the sum mentioned—£4,000. The letter to Dr. Douglas acknowledging his receipt of the last remittance of the purchase-money has been preserved: "I received the discharged bill safe, which puts an end to our relation of debtor and creditor:

> Now the gowd's thine,
> And the land's mine.

I hope our temporary connections form a happy contradiction to the proverb, 'I lent my money to my friend: I lost

my money and my friend.' " The worthy doctor continued on terms of intimacy with his distinguished neighbour. They visited each other frequently, and corresponded. He was the clergyman to whom Scott addressed " Paul's Letter " on religion in France, and as far back as 1777, when Scott was but in his sixth year, he had been made known to the Galashiels divine through his constant correspondent, Mrs. Cockburn of Fairnalee, as " the most extraordinary genius of a boy I ever saw." Dr. Douglas has been styled the " Father of Galashiels." When the woollen trade was in its infancy, and mill-owners were struggling into existence from the condition of country weavers which they had previously occupied, it was the parish minister who encouraged them in their new enterprise with pecuniary loans and by his strong, sagacious counsel. Many a time when the trade outlook was anything but promising, it was Dr. Douglas who stood at the helm and steered the town safe through the crisis into the serener waters of sound commercial prosperity.

Scott's first purchase of land was about a hundred acres, sixty of which were to be planted, and the remainder kept in pasture and tillage. An ornamental cottage, after the style of an English vicarage, was planned, and, as we shall see, became gradually absorbed in the stately pile that grew up around it. " This is the greatest incident which has lately taken place in our domestic concerns, and I assure you we are not a little proud of being greeted as *Laird* and *Lady* of Abbotsford. We will give a grand gala when we take possession of it." So Scott wrote to his brother-in-law in India, and a few days later, in a letter to Joanna Baillie, he says : " My dreams about my cottage go on ; as to my scale of dwelling—why, you shall see my plan when I have adjusted it. My present intention is to have only two spare bedrooms, with dressing-rooms, each of which will on a pinch have a couch bed ; but I cannot relinquish my Border principle of accommodating all the cousins and *duniwastles*, who will rather sleep on chairs, and on the floor, and in the hay-loft, than be absent when folks are gathered together." To John Leyden he penned this epistle three days before the great scholar's sudden decease on the shores of Java : " I have not time to write you much news. The best domestic intelligence is, that the Sheriff

of Selkirkshire, his lease of Ashestiel being out, has purchased about one hundred acres, extending along the banks of the Tweed, just above the confluence of the Gala, and about three miles from Melrose. There, saith fame, he designs to bigg himself a bower—*sibi et amicis*—and happy will he be when India shall return you to a social meal at his cottage. The place looks at present very like 'poor Scotland's gear.' It consists of a bank and a haugh as poor and bare as Sir John Falstaff's regiment, though I fear, ere you come to see, the verdant screen I am about to spread over its nakedness will have in some degree removed this reproach. But it has a wild, solitary air, and commands a splendid reach of the Tweed; and, to sum all in the words of Touchstone, 'It is a poor thing, but mine own.'" Three of his most trusted correspondents during the period of the making of Abbotsford were Joanna Baillie, Daniel Terry, the actor, who had been trained as an architect, and was able to assist in no end of ways, and J. B. S. Morritt of Rokeby, whose friendship Scott greatly valued, one of the most accomplished men, Lockhart says, that ever shared his confidence.

To Morritt he sketched the first plans of his house: "I have fixed only two points respecting my intended cottage—one is, that it shall be *in* my garden, or, rather, kailyard; the other, that the little drawing-room shall open into a little conservatory, in which there shall be a fountain. These are articles of taste which I have long since determined upon, but I hope before a stone of my paradise is begun we shall meet and collogue upon it"; and soon after he writes, as a kind of excuse for beginning "Rokeby," his fourth verse romance: "I want to build my cottage a little better than my limited finances will permit out of my ordinary income." In the summer of 1812, shortly after he had removed to Abbotsford, Lord Byron was one of his correspondents. "I am labouring here," he writes to Byron, "to contradict an old proverb, and make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, namely, to convert a bare haugh and brae into a comfortable farm." The year 1812 was one of Scott's busiest years. Five days every week until the middle of July he did Court of Session duty at Edinburgh. Saturday evening saw him at Abbotsford. On Monday he superintended the licking into shape of his new domicile, and again at night he was coaching it to the city. During the Court

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recess he pegged away at "Rokeby" and other literary work under circumstances that must have been trying enough. "As for the house and the poem," he writes to Morritt, "there are twelve masons hammering at the one, and one poor noddle at the other." He did not then know the luxury of a private "den." A window-corner, curtained off in the one habitable room which served for dining-room, drawing-room, and school-room, was the earliest study of Scott at Abbotsford. There, amid the hammer's incessant fall and the hum of many voices, he plodded on, and did a fair amount of work, varying his occupation at intervals in his favourite pastime of "adorning patches of naked land with trees *facturis nepotibus umbram.*" The letters to Terry commence in September, 1812, and show that some little progress had been made. "We have got up a good garden-wall, complete stables in the haugh, and the old farmyard enclosed with a wall, with some little picturesque additions in front. The new plantations have thriven amazingly well, acorns are coming up fast, and Tom Purdie is the happiest and most consequential person in the world." To Joanna Baillie he sends this characteristic note in the beginning of 1813: "No sooner had I corrected the last sheet of 'Rokeby' than I escaped to this Patmos as blithe as bird on tree, and have been ever since most decidedly idle—that is to say, with busy idleness. I have been banking, and securing, and dyking against the river, and planting willows, and aspens, and weeping birches. I have now laid the foundations of a famous background of copse, with pendant trees in front; and I have only to beg a few years to see how my colours will come out of the canvas"; and in March he adds: "What I shall finally make of this villa-work I don't know, but in the meantime it is very entertaining." In October, 1813, Terry is told that "these are no times for building," but in the following spring, in inviting the Morritts to visit him, he says: "I am arranging this cottage a little more conveniently, to put off the plague and expense of building another year; and I assure you I expect to spare Mrs. Morritt and you a chamber in the wall, with a dressing-room and everything handsome about you." In a letter to Terry, dated November, 1814—the year of "Waverley"—further progress is reported: "I wish you saw Abbotsford, which begins this season to look the whimsical, gay old cabin that we

had chalked out ; I have been obliged to relinquish Stark's plan, which was greatly too expensive. So I have made the old farm-house my *corps de logis*, with some outlying places for kitchen, laundry, and two spare bedrooms, which run along the east wall of the farm-court, not without some picturesque effect. A perforated cross, the spoils of the old kirk of Galashiels, decorates an advanced door, and looks very well." Than Scott there was no more enthusiastic antiquary. He had the faculty of discovering his treasures almost anywhere, and of annexing them as well. Not much was done during the next two years, but in November, 1816, a new set of improvements was under consideration. Abbotsford was rapidly losing its cottage character, and the "romance" period had begun. A notable addition was then agreed upon, of which Scott writes to Terry : "It will give me a handsome boudoir opening into the little drawing-room, to which it serves as a chapel of ease ; and on the other side to a handsome dining-parlour of twenty-seven feet by eighteen, with three windows to the north, and one to the south, the last to be Gothic and filled with stained glass. Besides these commodities there is a small conservatory or greenhouse, and a study for myself, which we design to fit up with ornaments from Melrose Abbey." And in the same letter he says : "I expect to get some decorations from the old Tolbooth of Edinburgh, particularly the copestones of the doorway, and a niche or two—one very handsome indeed ! Better get a niche *from* the Tolbooth than a niche *in* it.* . . . Abbotsford is looking pretty at last, and the planting is making some show. I have now several hundred acres thereof." By July, 1817, the foundation of that part of the existing house which extends from the hall westwards to the original courtyard had been laid, and Scott now found a new source of constant occupation in watching the proceedings of his masons. In August he was visited by Washington Irving.† To Joanna Baillie he writes in September : "I get on with my labours here ; my house is about to be roofed in, and a comical concern it is."

* He not only received the stones, but the door itself, which is now in the wall abutting the entrance-porch.

† Irving's "Abbotsford" is perhaps the best gossipy account of Scott's home-life at this period, and full of interesting sidelights on Johnny Bower, Laidlaw, and Tom Purdie, "my father's grand vizier," as Sophia Scott styled him.

By Thomas Faed, R.A.

SCOTT AND HIS LITERARY FRIENDS

and Campbell sit opposite each other. At the end of the table are the printers Constable and Ballantyne, and at their back, standing, the painters Allan and Wilkie. Thomas Thomson is seated on the extreme left, while Sir Humphry Davy is examining a sword-hilt.

It would be impossible to estimate the number of visitors and callers at Abbotsford, of all ranks and professions—princes of the blood royal, " periwigged dowagers," " underbred foreigners," " poverty-stricken poetasters," and hundreds who insisted from the slightest pretext on an interview with Scott. Apart from its presiding genius, the house was unique in every respect. History looked out from its walls, and the interior was a museum of antiquarian wealth. Scott was an inveterate relic-hunter, and a generally successful searcher. Everything has been left much as in Sir Walter's lifetime, and for the modern visitor there is the rarest possible treat. A short account may not be out of place, and it will be as well, while not attempting the superfluous in enumerating their countless relics and treasures, to describe the apartments open to the public in the order in which they are usually shown, with the more remarkable objects pointed out :

A heterogeneous combination of the quaint and curious in sculptured stone and pious inscription placed at random all round the building in the true revelry of Gothic exuberance makes up the exterior of what Ruskin styled " perhaps the most incongruous pile that gentlemanly modernism ever designed." Yet notwithstanding many oddities, the general effect is pleasing and surprising. Abbotsford was reared on no set plan, but with the desire to reproduce some of those features of ancient Scottish architecture which Scott most venerated. It is at once a monument of the high historical imagination from which sprang his more enduring memorial, and of the over-zeal which may be lavished, with very disastrous results, on the mere " pomp and circumstance of time " —the all-absorbing passion

> " To call this wooded patch of earth his own,
> And rear the pile of ill-assorted stone,
> And play the grand old feudal lord again."

Abbotsford proper is enclosed by an embattled wall with great turreted gateway bearing the " jougs " of Thrieve Castle. The projecting entrance-porch was copied from Linlithgow Palace. Near by are the grave and marble effigy of Maida, Scott's favourite deerhound, and the fountain originally on the Cross of Edinburgh, which is said to have flowed with wine on the occasion of royal visits to the city. Inscriptions from all sources have been woven into the walls. Above the Tolbooth door are the words : " The Lord of armies is my protector : Blissit ar they that trust in the Lord." Over the Library window is the lintel from the

Common Hall of the old Edinburgh College, with a quotation from Seneca ; and another inscription runs : " By Night by day Remember ay the goodness of ye Lord : And thank His name whos glorious fam is spred Throughout ye world."

As a rule—and there ought to be some alteration—visitors are first admitted into what is surely the *sanctum sanctorum* at Abbotsford—the Study. It remains very much as Scott left it, the reference books being in the same position. Scott's study table, at which he wrote most of the Waverleys, a small writing desk from the wood of the Spanish Armada, a plain armchair covered in black leather, the Wallace chair of Robroyston-wood, portraits of Claverhouse, Queen Elizabeth, Rob Roy, and Stothard's " Canterbury Pilgrims " are the chief objects of interest. A small turret-room—" Speak-a-bit " (see p. 43)—contains the bronze cast of Scott's head taken after death, and a private staircase connects with the bedrooms.

Adjoining is the Library, the largest apartment in the house. The richly carved ceiling of Jamaica cedar is modelled from Melrose and Roslin. Twenty thousand volumes line the walls. Here are presents from George IV., the Pope, Constable, and others. Napoleon's blotting-book and pen-tray, taken from his carriage after Waterloo ; Queen Mary's seal, and a piece of her dress ; Prince Charlie's quaigh, and a lock of his hair ; Rob Roy's purse ; Helen MacGregor's brooch, and Flora Macdonald's pocket-book ; locks of Nelson's and Wellington's hair ; Burns's tumbler ; a number of miniatures, including Scott at the age of six, and Lady Scott when Miss Carpenter ; and many other curios are contained within a glass table by the bow-window. Over the fireplace is Allan's painting of the second Sir Walter Scott in the uniform of the 15th Hussars, who died at sea in 1847, and with whom perished the hope of the family. The famous Chantrey bust of Scott, of which Lockhart said that it " alone preserves for posterity the cast of expression most fondly remembered by all who mingled in his domestic circle," was placed in its present niche by young Sir Walter the day of his father's funeral.

Next we pass to the Drawing-room, a large and lofty chamber, rich in its furniture and walls. The paintings are both numerous and valuable, and include the full-length Raeburn portrait of Scott, Saxon's portrait of Lady Scott, Scott's mother by Watson, water-colour sketches of Ann and Sophia Scott in peasant attire, and a presentation portrait of the Hon. Mrs. Maxwell-Scott, great-granddaughter of Sir Walter. Portraits of Hogarth, Dryden, Cromwell, Nell Gwynne, Queen Mary immediately after decapitation, and James VI., with Thomson of Duddingston's Fast Castle, and Bennet's Jedburgh, are the main ornaments of a fascinating apartment.

The Armoury, intersecting the house, and forming a kind of ante-room to the dining and drawing-rooms, is a treasure-house of the first order—perhaps the most splendid private collection in the world. Weapons and curios of every conceivable character, from every country, and with the most varied historical associations, are ranged round the walls. Here are Rob Roy's gun, broadsword, dirk, sporran, and skene dhu ; Montrose's

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THE STUDY

sword, given to the great Marquis by Charles I.; Claverhouse's and Napoleon's pistols; the Tyrolese patriot Speckbacker's rifle; James VI.'s hunting-flask; Prince Charlie's hunting-knives; a set of thumbikins; the keys of Loch Leven Castle; Sir Walter's own gun, sword, and sabre worn by him when a yeoman in the Edinburgh Light Dragoons; with battle-axes, shields, spear-heads, daggers, spurs, pistols, and guns galore. The Armoury paintings consist chiefly of Scott's servants and friends—John Swanston, his gamekeeper, Peter Mathieson, Tom Purdie, John Ballantyne, Bailie Nicol Jarvie, Professor Wilson, the Scotts of Raeburn, and Sir Walter himself. Several drawings by Kirkpatrick Sharpe adorn the walls. Three carvings by Andrew Currie, and Greenshields's statuette of Scott, are worthy of notice.

In this order of going round, the Entrance-hall comes last—a spacious apartment panelled with dark oak from Dunfermline, and roofed with pointed arches of the same material. A sort of rich and red twilight, even at noonday, from the emblazoned "Bellenden windows," pervades the place, which is literally laden with relics and trophies. The cornice displays a double line of escutcheons, with the heraldic bearings of the Scotts, Kers, Elliots, Douglases, Maxwells, and other Border families and the inscription in black letter:

> These be the Coat Armouris of ye Clannis and men of name quha keepit the Scottish Marches in ye days of auld. Thay were worthie in thair tyme and in thair defens God thaim defendid.

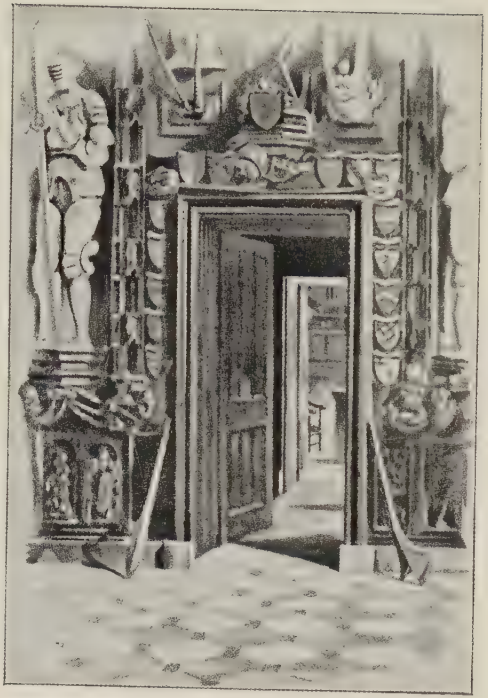
The arms of Scott's own ancestors occupy sixteen shields running down the centre of the roof. Three of these he was unable to trace out, and filled up the blanks with blue clouds and the motto: *Nox—alta—premit*—"Oblivion has covered them." The floor is a mosaic of black-and-white Hebridean marble. Some of the more conspicuous objects in the Hall are Sir John Cheney's massive armour suit—the biggest man who fought at Bosworth Field—grasping a huge two-handed sword; the keys of the Edinburgh Tolbooth; the lock of Selkirk Jail; a Jeddart axe; the Hermitage touting-horn; Stow burgess-hat; relics from Waterloo, Culloden, and Roxburgh; the mistletoe-chest where Ginevra lay; Marie Antoinette's clock; Archbishop Sharp's grate; Ralph Erskine's pulpit, which Scott turned into a small wine-press; canopies copied from Melrose; a bust of Wordsworth; and the last suit of clothes worn by Sir Walter—drab trousers, striped waistcoat, dark-green coat with white metal buttons, and fawn beaver hat.

The Dining-room—"his own great parlour"—is not open to the public. "It was the first room of any pretensions that he built at Abbotsford, and much care was expended on its design and decoration." He adorned the walls with portraits of his ancestors, and, says Lockhart, "he seemed never to weary of perusing them." It was in this room that the final tragedy was played out on that balmy autumn afternoon of 1832—"a beautiful day, so warm that every window was wide open, and so perfectly still that the sound of all others most delicious to his ear—the

gentle ripple of the Tweed over its pebbles—was distinctly audible as we knelt around the bed, and his eldest son kissed and closed his eyes."

Since Scott died, hundreds of thousands have paid their devotions at this Mecca of the Borderland, and, while there might be improvements in the method of "doing" Abbotsford—its place as a museum and show-house less emphasized—it must ever have a close personal fascination for all to whom the story of its maker has an appeal both saddening and inspiring.

[For a full account of Abbotsford see the present author's "Abbotsford" (A. and C. Black, 1905), or his abbreviated issue in Beautiful Britain Series.]



THE ENTRANCE HALL, ABBOTSFORD

LADY SCOTT

CHAPTER XIV

MELROSE MEMORIES

MELROSE has chief claim to be considered the capital of the Scott Country. The more personal shrines of Sir Walter are in the parish : Abbotsford, the idol of his affections and his home for many years ; Chiefswood, possessing the next place in his heart ; the Abbey, the most splendid ruin in Scotland, beloved and venerated for its own sake, and for him whose genius has begirt it with undimmed glory. The personality of Scott is seen most of all about Melrose. Its main attraction a hundred years since, his influence is an increasing rather than a diminishing factor in the fortunes of the district. The modern town may be said to be wholly his making. No other writer has been the means of creating so many favourite Scottish haunts, and the statement that "Scott restored Scotland" is full of significance. The literature that has gathered around him is legion, while his own work has never lost caste or been reduced to any common level. For grace of touch, pureness of sentiment, inherent healthiness, and power of producing the most genuine pleasure, the romances of Scott are likely to remain unrivalled.

One is not long in Melrose ere its charm as the Mecca of the Scottish Border is discovered. The name was derived from the Celtic *maol-ros*, "the open or naked headland." For this etymology we must go further down the Tweed some two and a half miles, to Old Melrose, as the spot is still known. Here the river makes the most remarkable, and certainly the most beautiful, bend in all its seaward flow. From Leaderfoot and Ravenswood, round the richly-wooded braes of Gledswood and the bold, scraggy bluff of Bemersyde, it takes an almost circular sweep, more than the ordinary horse-shoe loop. When the surrounding country was for the most part covered with forest, the promontory of Old Melrose presented the pleasing and unusual appearance of an open surface clothed with green

turf and broom. There were few choicer sites for the establishment of a great monastic institution. The founding of the Abbey further up the Tweed appears strange when contrasted with the environment of the ancient house and its hallowed associations. Dorothy Wordsworth's wish, expressed to Scott in 1803, finds echo in most hearts: "We wished we could have brought the ruins of Melrose to this spot." On this queenly situation the original monastery of Melrose was erected early in the seventh century. It was at first a humble enough structure, with walls of hewn oak and roof of reeds. A stone edifice succeeded this, and a strong rampart, stretching across the narrowest part of the peninsula, defended the whole place. But nothing is left to tell where it stood; silence reigns by "the beautiful bend." Old Melrose is a forsaken shrine; a few place-names preserve the memory of its former sanctity in the Monk's Ford and the Holy Weil (pool), the Chapel Knowe and the Girth-Gate. The finest prospect is, of course, from the opposite highway. This was Scott's favourite view on the Tweed. There his "yett" is still seen, and, as was his wont, we, too, may lean over it and revel in the gorgeous panorama outspread in front of us. Elihu Burritt stood here one day, and has described it as "the most magnificent view I ever saw in Scotland, excepting, perhaps, the one from Stirling Castle only for the feature which the Forth supplies." The eye takes in the familiar landmarks: the Cheviots, Rubers-law, the Dunion, the Gala Water hills, and Eildon in the foreground, monarch of the scene.

> "Above the mist, the sun has kissed
> Our Eildons, one yet three;
> The triplet smiles, like glittering isles
> Set in a silver sea."

The "bend" is best seen from here with the present house of Old Melrose nestling in its greenwood bower. How many historic spots are in the neighbourhood! Sandyknowe is behind us only a few miles. On our right rises the Black Hill of Earlston, *red* enough from this particular point. At its foot lies cosy Cowdenknowes, "where Homes had ance commanding," and Redpath, a decaying place, once a sweet old-time hamlet—a Border "Thrums," with the merry click-clack of a score of

looms in its smiling cottages. Gledswood, Drygrange, Ravenswood—poetic names—have each the most charming nook "where Tweed her silent way majestic holds." There, close at hand, peeping up among its ancestral trees, the bartisans of Bemersyde remind us of Scott's remark to Washington Irving: "There seemed to him almost a wizard spell hanging over it in consequence of the prophecy of Thomas the Rhymer, in which in his young days he most potently believed." And further over, on the brow of a precipitous bank facing a broad expanse of Tweed, is a huge red figure of Wallace, with the glare of a Homeric demi-god, and in his hand the "brand which none but he can wield"—a veritable Excalibur—as tall as himself.* Dryburgh is not far distant, and Mertoun, where Scott spent happy days at the seat of his kinsman, and wrote the "Eve of St. John" and the Introduction to Canto vi. of "Marmion," with its charming picture of Christmas on Tweedside.

Old Melrose, then, is abundant in natural beauty, and surrounded with memories the most romantic. In those distant days it must have been meet spot for religious retreat and saintly meditation. Colonized from Lindisfarne, Aidan's disciple Eata, "a man much revered and meek," was its first Abbot. After him were Boisil, who gave his name to the neighbouring St. Boswells, and Cuthbert, the shepherd of Leaderside, by and by the most beloved figure in the history of English monasticism. Cuthbert died in his cell at Lindisfarne in 687, and during the Danish incursions his followers bore from shrine to shrine the uncorrupted body of their Bishop, among its numerous resting-places being the saint's home-sanctuary by the Tweed. From hence, according to the oft-told tradition embodied in

* "Wallace" was unveiled by Lord Buchan on September 22, 1814, the anniversary of Stirling Bridge. The monument is 22½ feet high, and was designed by Smith of Darnick. A statue of Burns was the original intention, but on seeing the massive sandstone block fresh from the quarry the eccentric Earl changed his mind, and set up instead a memorial to the "great patriot hero, ill-requited chief." An urn in front carries the following lines:

"The peerless knight of Ellerslie
Who wav'd on Ayr's romantic shore
The beamy torch of liberty,
And roaming round from sea to sea,
From glade obscure or gloomy rock
His bold compatriots called to free
The realm from Edward's iron yoke."

" Marmion," it floated down the river in a stone coffin as far as Tillmouth, where it stopped of its own accord. Nor would the sacred bones have peace in other places tried by the weary monks until

> " after many wanderings past,
> He chose his lordly seat at last,
> Where his Cathedral, huge and vast,
> Looks down upon the Wear ;
> There, deep in Durham's Gothic shade,
> His relics are in secret laid."

Old Melrose fell on evil days. Partly destroyed in 839 during the Scoto-Saxon wars, and afterwards rebuilt, it was again a desolate place in 1050, when the Culdee Church was rapidly losing ground. A few monks sought out its seclusion, among them Turgot, Bishop of St. Andrews, and Confessor of the saint-Queen Margaret, " the Pearl of Scotland " ; but they were not able to raise it above the status of a mere chaplainry dedicated to St. Cuthbert and endowed with the privilege of sanctuary. It continued for long as a favourite pilgrim resort, and an ascetic of the thirteenth century added much to its fame.*

From the middle of the twelfth century the new Abbey of Melrose overshadowed in wealth and power the ancient mother-house. The enthusiasm of the Sair Sanct laid hold of the Scottish heart till the second Melrose became the most famous establishment in the kingdom. Built between 1136 and 1146, dedicated to the Virgin, and constantly enriched by Crown gifts and private benefactions, it was tenanted by a colony of Cistercian monks from Rievaulx in Yorkshire, the pioneers of their order in Scotland. Their religion was of a purely passive type. They were more concerned with the cultivation of the soil than the cure of souls, and their settlements were usually in some quiet sequestered valley by the banks of a meandering stream. Part of their time was devoted to learning, and in the transcribing of books and manuscripts they took keen delight. With a real love for Art,

* Old Melrose had a famous visionary-ascetic in the seventh century—Drythelme, a Scottish Dante—who believed he had actually passed a whole night in the abode of the dead. He anticipated, as he said, the horrors of purgatory, which he had witnessed, by the most rigorous penance and self-torture, immersing himself daily in the Tweed, even in the depth of winter, without undressing or afterwards removing his wet garments.

their churches were embellished after the most ornate designs. Nor did they neglect the stern Benedictine rules which bound them by the most solemn vows. Still, as Captain Clutterbuck said, they had "an easy life of it," and as the old rhyming taunt puts it:

"The monks of Melrose made fat kail
On Fridays when they fasted,
Nor wanted they gude beef and ale,
So lang's their neighbours' lasted."

But times were troublous and uncertain. A Damocles sword hung over the Border Abbeys in the Southron's frequent menace. Again and again the hard and graceless hand of the destroyer came against them. Rent and scarred by the "auld enemy"—the shrines of peace changed into very charnel-houses—their experience was singularly chequered. They had, at best, a short-lived glory. Four hundred years saw them reared, and at the height of their power, then ruined. From 1146 to 1545 is a period comparatively brief in the history of a great religious house like Melrose. David I., the founder, died in 1153, and was succeeded by his grandson, Malcolm, the smooth-skinned "Maiden," a zealous supporter of Melrose. After him came William the Lion, during whose long reign the Abbey made substantial progress. Alexander II. was another kingly benefactor. Dying in 1249 "on lone Kerrera's Isle," his embalmed body was brought to "fair Melrose" for burial near the High Altar, where his tombstone is still seen. Alexander III.'s reign marked an epoch of abounding peace and prosperity in the religious and social life of the nation. But

"When Alexander our King was dede
That Scotland led in luve and le,"

the political horizon grew black enough. In the War of Independence the Abbey was spared while Edward I. lived, by the fealty of its Abbot to the English Crown. But the second Edward wreaked desperate vengeance upon it in 1322. Scarcely a vestige of the original fabric is to be found. It is to this calamity that we owe the supreme splendour of the new shrine. Mainly through the munificence of Robert the Bruce, by the grant of a sum equal to £50,000 in modern money, the Abbey was rebuilt in 1326 in the most magnificent style of the period. In 1384 it

was again burned by Richard II., and again restored. In 1544 Evers and Latoun, previous to Ancrum Moor, " where Scott and Douglas led the Border spears," mutilated the tombs of the heroic Douglases at Melrose, and in the next year Hertford completed the work of destruction. At the Reformation it was finally dismantled, and for long afterwards the ruin was used as a quarry by the townspeople. The statues were demolished in 1649, and up to 1810 the nave was the parish church. Melrose was long in the hands of the Buccleuch family, who have taken every measure to preserve it, without imparting a suggestion of restoration or of artificial support. The ruin is now the property of the nation, thanks to the seventh Duke of Buccleuch.

A detailed description is impossible here. As the grandest ecclesiastical ruin in the country, second to few—very few—in delicacy of design and expression, and in gracefulness of line and composition, it must be seen to be understood. Every window, arch, cloister, corbel, keystone, doorhead and buttress of this exquisite example of medieval Gothic is a study in itself—all elaborately carved, yet no two alike. The sculpture is unequalled both in symmetry and variety, embracing some of the loveliest specimens of floral tracery and the most quaint and grotesque representations imaginable.

" A favourite and unique form of decoration employed on the capitals of many of the columns is the leaf of the Scotch kail. High altar, choir, transepts and nave, chapels and cloisters, and great tower looked at from the ground or the roof are an inexhaustible study of fine grouping, chaste design and elegant decoration, so rich, so prodigally rich, that one burns with indignation that any portion of so wonderful an edifice should have been bruised or destroyed. How delicate those clustered columns, those fairy arches, those slender mullioned windows and varied tracery ! How unique that Crown of Thorns window on the north, and on the south wall that doorway and window, with its splendid wheel of seven compartments !

" All must be seen and lingered with to be fully enjoyed. The hidden corner, no less than the sunlit, must be studied till all the ornaments are known and loved. Stars, shells, flowers and plants, thistles, roses, and fleurs-de-lys are here in endless variety. How perfect, too, is the workmanship ; no slipshod, no shoddy, no fine carving wasted on poor stone, but all the stones laid in as found in the quarries, and hence a minimum of decay. The mouldings, the carvings, and all the ornaments left are remarkably sharp, and many as good as if just finished, even to the minute veins of leaves and the tender edges of flowers and fruits. Indeed, but

for the relentless hand and cruel fire of warrior and conqueror, but for the mistaken zeal of ignorant reformers, and the heartless indifference of gentry and peasantry who made the grand pile their quarry, it must have remained to us this day a perfect whole, for Time alone seems to hurt it but little. What a monument it would then have been to us of all the riches and glories of a perfected Gothic, an enchanted temple of history and the splendours of the Middle Ages." *

No one knew the Abbey better or bore a truer regard towards it than Scott, and its architecture is nowhere more faithfully described than in the "Lay." As a ruin it touched him with a deeper pathos, and quickened his historical imagination more than the other Tweedside fanes. He was familiar with every nook and corner. Nothing escaped him, and how has he reproduced for us its decayed greatness, and recalled to the living present the long-dead tenants of its clay! Melrose has been restored and repeopled by a mightier Wizard than him who sleeps under its fretted canopy. Another Book of Might, subtler far than that snatched from the dead man's hand by William of Deloraine, has enthralled the world. Seldom has there been a poem weirder with ghostly gloom, fuller of quick-breathing action, or whose verses rattle in their ranks with sharper pictorial effect.

"Now, slow and faint, he led the way,
Where, cloister'd round, the garden lay;
The pillar'd arches were over their head,
And beneath their feet were the bones of the dead.
Spreading herbs, and flowerets bright,
Glisten'd with the dew of night;
Nor herb, nor floweret, glisten'd there,
But was carved in the cloister-arches as fair.

* * * * *

By a steel-clenched postern door,
They enter'd now the chancel tall;
The darken'd roof rose high aloof
On pillars, lofty, and light, and small;
The keystone, that locked each ribbed aisle,
Was a fleur-de-lys, or a quatre-feuille;
The corbels were carved grotesque and grim,
And the pillars, with cluster'd shafts so trim,
With base and with capital flourish'd around,
Seem'd bundles of lances which garlands had bound.

* * * * *

* Sir D. Y. Cameron, R.A., LL.D., in the *Artist*.

The moon on the east oriel shone
Through slender shafts of shapely stone,
By foliaged tracery combined ;
Thou would'st have thought some fairy's hand,
'Twixt poplars straight, the osier wand
In many a freakish knot had twined ;
Then framed a spell, when the work was done,
And changed the willow-wreaths to stone."

The best view is from the south-east corner of the churchyard, where the *coup d'œil* is striking. But

" If thou would'st view fair Melrose aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight ;
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild, but to flout, the ruins gray.
When the broken arches are black in night,
And each shafted oriel glimmers white,
When the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruined central tower ;
When buttress and buttress, alternately,
Seem framed of ebon and ivory ;
When silver edges the imagery,
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die ;
When distant Tweed is heard to rave,
And the owlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,
Then go—but go alone the while—
Then view St. David's ruined pile ;
And, home returning, soothly swear
Was never scene so sad and fair ! "

There, by the High Altar, lie the throbless heart of the Bruce ; the brave Earl Douglas, hero of Chevy Chase—" a Douglas dead, his name hath won the field " ; the dark Knight of Liddesdale ; the English commanders at Ancrum Moor—

" The ravaged Abbey rung the funeral knell,
When fierce Latoun and savage Evers fell " ;

and Michael Scot—

" Buried on St. Michael's night,
When the bell toll'd one, and the moon was bright,
Whose chamber was dug among the dead,
When the floor of the chancel was stainëd red."

And many another—monarch and monk, warrior and priest, laird and lady, the young, the glad, the old, the sad—rest where solemn silence covers all.

An interesting study may be made of the inscriptions and epitaphs around the walls of the Abbey, and

> " The mouldering shields,
> Scutcheons of honour or pretence,
> Quarter'd in old armorial sort,
> Remains of rude magnificence."

John Murdo, or Morow, presumably the Master-mason of Melrose and other edifices, is thus commemorated :

> JOHN MOROW : SUM TYME : CALLIT :
> WAS : I : AND BORN : IN PARYSEE :
> CERTAINLY : AND HAD : IN : KEPPING
> ALL : MASON : WORK : OF : SANTAN :
> DRUYS : YE : HYE : KYRK : OF : GLASGU :
> MELROS : AND : PASLEY : OF :
> NYDDYSDAYLL : AND : OF : GALWAY :
> I : PRAY : TO : GOD : AND : MARY : BAITH :
> AND : SWEET : ST : JOHN : KEEP : THIS : HALY :
> KIRK : FRAE : SKAITH : *

" Hic Jacet Johanna d. Ross " marks the tomb by the sacristy door of Alexander II.'s Queen. " Heir lyis the Race of ye Hovs of Zair," touches with its simple pathos. Pious invocations and mottoes meet the eye all over the ruin, and the chapels contain the dust of generations of ancient Border families —the Pringles of Whytbank and Galashiels, Scotts of Gala, Bostons of Gattonside, Kers of Kippilaw and Yair, etc. One of the finest poetical inscriptions in epitaphian literature will be seen in the churchyard :

> " The earth goeth on the earth
> Glist'ring like gold ;
> The earth goes to the earth
> Sooner than it wold ;
> The earth builds on the earth
> Castles and towers ;
> The earth says to the earth,
> All shall be ours."

Tom Purdie's grave, with the tombstone erected by Scott, is at the east end of the yard ; and close under the Abbey

* Morow is claimed as the first Master of St. John's Lodge of Freemasons, Melrose, held to be the oldest in Scotland. The festival of St. John—December 27—is observed with great *éclat*, when the Abbey is the scene of a picturesque celebration by torchlight.

windows rests all that is mortal of the Christian philosopher Sir David Brewster. "The Lord is my Light," are the words on his sarcophagus—a text chosen by the great master of optics himself. Few men have been more held in honour for eminent scholarship and a pre-eminently saintly career. The grave of Peter Mathieson, Scott's coachman, has been suitably marked by the Abbotsford Scott Fellowship.

The Cross of Melrose in the centre of the town, crowned by the figure of a unicorn and the arms of Scotland, and bearing the date of restoration, 1642, is probably coeval with the Abbey. Many spots of interest not yet mentioned lie around Melrose. The heart of a widely historic region, abundant in natural beauty, a delightful health-resort, and, enshrining above all, next to Shakespeare, the most notable name in British literature, Melrose is the most popular tourist headquarters in Scotland. The visitor may make his way hence to all points of the Border compass, sure of touching the most storied ground in the kingdom. There are the "green Eildon Hills" always in vision, Wizard-cleft, legend-haunted,

> "for weirdly deeds renowned,
> With ancient camp of Roman crowned."

It is impossible to live in the Border country and not to come under the influence of those three bleak hills. Through the long years they have sat, like old kings who never die, while Britons and Romans, Picts and Scots, English and Scottish, Cavaliers and Roundheads, Covenanters and King's men, have shed their blood in mortal fight under their shadow. They have watched the wild moorland grow into fertile plains. They have seen the cave-man pass through many stages and arrive at the sturdy peasant who now makes red scars round their feet with his plough. They have lived so long that few besides the professed geologist remember that they are of volcanic origin, and that the shingle on their sides was once boiling lava. And always, to the end of time, and at the ends of the earth, wherever a true Borderer is found, they must live in his heart for ever. Hogg describes the view from their summit as "an amphitheatre of perfect beauty where nothing is wanting to enrich the scene." Here Scott loved to linger. "I can stand," he said, "on the Eildon Hill and point out forty-three places famous in war and

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OLD MELROSE AND THE EILDONS FROM BEMERSYDE HILL—
SCOTT'S FAVOURITE VIEW

MELROSE ABBEY

verse."* And hither he came with Washington Irving in 1817. "I have brought you, like the pilgrim in the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' to the top of the Delectable Mountains, that I may show you all the goodly regions hereabouts. Yonder is Lammermuir and Smailholm; and there you have Galashiels and Torwoodlee and Gala Water; and in that direction you see Teviotdale and the Braes of Yarrow; and Ettrick stream winding along like a silver thread, to throw itself into the Tweed. It may be pertinacity, but to my eye, these grey hills and all this wild Border country have beauties peculiar to themselves. When I have been for some time in the rich scenery about Edinburgh, which is like ornamented garden land, I begin to wish myself back again among my own honest grey hills; and if I did not see the heather at least once a year, *I think I should die*!" The "glamourie" of Sir Walter is around all, with a spell no less potent than that of the earlier Scot who is made to cleave the once single cone of Eildon into its three picturesque peaks; or of the

> "Mysterious Rhymer, doomed by Fate's decree
> Still to revisit Eildon's lonely tree";

or of "proud Arthur" and his warriors asleep in "Eildon's caverns vast," waiting the blast of the horn that is to peal them forth from Fairyland. On the southern base of the hill nestle Bowden, the birthplace of Thomas Aird, author of "The Old Bachelor," one of the truest of the Border bards, whose realistic "Devil's Dream" is a masterpiece of imagination. Here also Andrew Scott, the Bowden beadle, wrote his spirited ballad "Symon and Janet"—a tale of the False Alarm—which finds a corner in every good Scottish collection; and James Thomson, a Bowden native, though for many years resident in Hawick, where he died in 1888, has left verses that will be long remembered. Than his "Auld Smiddy End," "Oor Jock," and others, there are few choicer compositions in the language. G. P. R. James, the novelist, resided for a time at Maxpoffle, near Bowden, and John Younger, the philosophical shoemaker of St. Boswells, must not be forgotten. Angler, poet, essayist, his tombstone tells how his "genial humour, manly independence, and ardent

* An Eildon Indicator, recently erected, is of great service in pointing out such places.

love of literature won for him the esteem of men of every rank, and drew around him the best friendships of the Border."

The literary associations of Melrose are, of course, mainly with Scott. The " Kennaquhair " of the " Monastery " and the " Abbot," the influence of the great romancist touches the whole district. Here, by the broad tranquil stretch of Tweed, where we may look down upon it from the steep side of the Weir Hill—a picture of rare beauty—is the scene of the Sacristan's sousing by the " White Lady," amusingly narrated in Chapter V. of the former novel.

Further up the river at Bridgend, a little beyond Darnick, stood the bridge, the keeper of which declined to answer his demand for crossing. " Peter, my good friend, my very excellent friend, Peter, be so kind as to lower the drawbridge. Peter, I say, doest thou not hear ? It is thy gossip, Father Philip, who calls thee." Near by, the Elwand or Elwyn or Allan Water joins the Tweed, and in its Fairy Dean, " a familiar refuge of the elfin race," says Scott, the " White Lady " made her perplexing appearances. In the open country towards the head of the glen are the three Towers mentioned in Scott's Preface—Hillslap, or Glendearg, where lived Dame Glendinning and her two sons with their two guests—the Lady Avenel and her daughter ; Langshaw, and Colmslie.*

The Pavilion, to the east of Elwyndale, was for a time the residence of the sportsman Scrope, who lived " on terms of affectionate intimacy with Sir Walter." Here he wrote his charming sketches—" Days and Nights of Salmon Fishing in the Tweed." And at Allerly, in the orchard-studded suburb of Gattonside, opposite the " dark Abbaye," and the Eildons, with the sparkling Tweed rolling between, Sir David Brewster resided from 1827 till his death in 1868. John Hoy, a minor poet of repute in his day, was a native of Gattonside, and sings rapturously of his fascinating village in the rich vale of the Tweed. At Melrose, Anne Ross Cousin, wife of the Rev. William Cousin, wrote her world-admired hymn, " The Sands of Time are Sinking." Elizabeth Clephane, authoress of the popular evangelistic hymn—

* Glendearg is dated 1585, later than the period of the " Monastery." Both it and Colmslie were held by the Cairncross family. The site of an abbey of St. Colm attests a great ecclesiastical antiquity. Langshaw is more modern.

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MELROSE CROSS

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LEADERFOOT

Sankey's favourite—"There were Ninety and Nine that safely lay," died at Bridgend in 1869. William Brockie, the Border "Admirable Crichton," was some time a law-clerk at Melrose. So was James Dodds, Covenant-bard and historian. "Dominie Sampson" finds his prototype in George Thomson, son of the parish minister, and a tutor in Scott's own family. "Captain Doolittle" of the "Monastery" was Captain Walter Tait of the Royal Marines, a one-legged hero who died in 1836. Mention should be made of Adam Milne and James Wade, historians of the town.

From Melrose the manufacturing burgh of Galashiels (see page 121) may be easily visited. Originally a hamlet built for the accommodation of the Abbey pilgrims, and up to 1770 a mere village, having only one slated roof and fewer than 800 inhabitants, it is now entirely modern, with a population of 13,000. The name is immortalized in Burns's song :

> "There's braw, braw lads on Yarrow braes,
> That wander thro' the blooming heather ;
> But Yarrow braes, nor Ettrick shaws
> Can match the lads o' Gala Water."

Older versions are quoted in Chambers's "Songs of Scotland," and of the ballad the "Sour Plums o' Galashiels" (armorial bearings of the town) only the air is preserved, the words being lost.*

In narrating the death of his uncle Thomas, in 1823, at the age of ninety, Sir Walter Scott remarks: "Being a great musician on the Scotch pipes, he had, when on his death-bed, a favourite tune played over to him by his son James, that he might be sure he left him in full possession of it. After hearing it, he hummed it over himself, and corrected it in several of the notes. The air was that called the 'Sour Plums o' Galashiels.'" It was this uncle, according to Lockhart, who, on one occasion, greeted his illustrious nephew with the words, "God bless thee, Walter, my man! thou hast risen to be great, but thou wast always good!"

* Gala's Memorial of the Great War—the replica of a Border Tower with a mounted mosstrooper in front, is the finest of all Border memorials. Nearby is a pedestalled bust of Robert Burns.

CHAPTER XV

THE RHYMER'S TOWN

A SHRINE in the Scott Country deserving a large share of attention from lovers of Sir Walter is Earlston, the Rhymer's Town, the pleasantest of drives from Melrose, four and a half miles distant. With the Tweed and the Eildons in view most of the way, through nooks of quiet natural beauty, till the charming Vale of the Leader opens up on the left at Leaderfoot into the very heart of the "Arcadia of Scotland," this is a bit of the Border to which modern tourists are being more and more attracted. We may follow Sir Walter's footsteps from Abbotsford to Melrose, and across the hill by Gattonside to Earlston; or we can picture him driving, as he often did, to Drygrange,

> "with the milk-white yowes,
> 'Twixt Tweed and Leader standing,"

thence to Gledswood and Bemersyde, and round by Redpath Rig and Cowdenknowes to the town and Tower of True Thomas. Some of Scott's earliest recollections centred here. The figure of the Rhymer loomed up before him in the old Sandyknowe days, and much of his first literary work was associated with that once potent name. In the "Minstrelsy" are the triple ballads of the Rhymer, with copious illustrative notes, and the scholarly editing of "Sir Tristrem" was the work of Scott's thirty-third year. He began but did not continue, a romance whose chief subject was Thomas the Rhymer.* And in "Castle Dangerous," his last novel, the imagination of the writer returned to the youth-memories of Ercildoune.†

No personage exercised a stronger influence throughout Scotland during its troublous times than the Seer of Ercildoune, and none is surrounded with deeper mystery. Somewhere about the beginning of the thirteenth century, when Henry of Winchester sat on the throne of England, and Alexander II. bore the

* See appendix to General Preface to "Waverley."
† See Chapter V. of the novel.

Scottish crown with all its perils, Thomas, known to future generations as the prophet-bard of his race, appears to have been born on the banks of Leader Water, where stands in quiet rural beauty the Berwickshire township of Earlston.

Modern Earlston differs vastly from primitive Ercildoune. The village, consisting of a few heather-thatched, wattled huts, arose probably in the haugh of Leader, or what is now termed the "west toun end." The landscape lay, like most of the Border country, in a thick forest of oak and birch, through which roamed "dae and rae and of a' wild bestis great plentie." As time passed on, forest clearings were effected and more permanent habitations set up. One of these, the little hamlet by Leaderside, received the name of Ercildoune, a combination of and development from the Cambro-British *Arciol-dun*, "the look-out" or "prospect-hill," the hill to the south, which affords an extensive view of the Leader and Tweed Valleys. This, the Black Hill, as it is called, is crowned by a British fort of three concentric rings or ramparts, which may be partially distinguished, and traces of the Ottadeni cave-dwellings—the aborigines of the district—are also visible.

Ercildoune appears to have been a place of importance during the earlier years of Scottish story. The chief families in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were the Lindsays and the Earls of March and Dunbar. It is improbable that Thomas the Rhymer owned any extensive domain. His name is not found in any State document of the period, and from the Ragman Roll it is a notable omission. The Lindsays were the ecclesiastical patrons of the place. William de Lindsei de Ercildoune granted to the Priory of Coldingham the church at Ercildoune, and another of the same family, "of Fauope, near the Leder," made sundry bequests to the monks of Melrose. There is no tradition as to the residential abode of the Lindsays. For the Earls of March the accepted though unproved tradition of the district is that they had, at the east end of the village, a stronghold known as the Earl's Tower, and that close at hand a group of buildings, probably feudal residences, gave name to the Earl's Toun, which by-and-by became the designation of the whole village. It is possible, however, that Cowdenknowes was the original seat of the Dunbar family in the district. We read

of royal visits to Ercildoune. David, the Sair Sanct, subscribed in June, 1136, *apud Ercheldon* the Foundation Charter of Melrose Abbey, and his son, Prince Henry, in 1143, subscribed here the Confirmatory Charter of the same Abbey. Many visits were made to Ercildoune by succeeding Scottish Sovereigns. James IV. " campit an nicht in Ersilton " on his way from Edinburgh to Flodden. Prince Charlie passed through in 1745, on his march to Berwick-upon-Tweed, annexing a number of cart-horses and cattle belonging to the (to him) disloyal inhabitants.

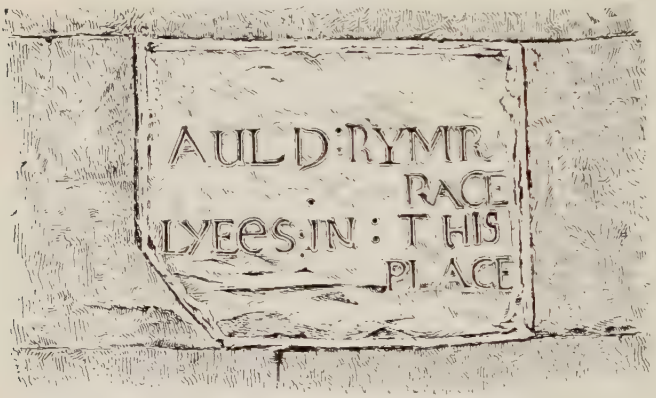
Not a patch of land in the neighbourhood is held by a representative of the Lindsays or of the great Border house of March and Dunbar. Only one relic is left of those far-off days, the Tower of the Seer whose memory still lingers by Leader glens and haughs—the memory of a man whose name held spellbound the heart of a strong but superstitious people. Standing beside these ivy-clad walls, we call to mind the words of " Delta " Moir: " While I was yet ignorant that any part of the ruins were in existence they were pointed out to me, and, I need not add, awakened a thousand stirring associations connected with the legends, the superstitions, and the history of medieval ages, when nature brought forth gorgons, and hydras, and chimeras dire, and social life seemed entirely devoted to ' ladye love and war, renown and knightly worth.' "

The Rhymer's Tower is the outstanding " lion " of Earlston. Some time ago the ruin and lands surrounding it were in the market, and with this came a fear that the tower might vanish before the rising walls of factory or other buildings. The Edinburgh Border Counties Association came to the rescue and with praiseworthy zeal acquired the ancient landmark. The Tower was formally taken possession of at a great public function on August 2, 1895, when Mr. Wallace Bruce, United States Consul in Edinburgh, unveiled a tablet (designed by D. W. Stevenson, R.S.A.), bearing this inscription from Scott's ballad:

" ' Farewell, my father's ancient Tower !
A long farewell,' said he ;
' The scene of pleasure, pomp, or power,
Thou never more shalt be.' "

A word on the condition of the Tower before we pass to the Rhymer. All that remains is a part of two walls rising to the

EARLSTON



THE 'RYMR' STONE AT ERCILDOUNE CHURCH, EARLSTON

THE RHYMER'S TOWER, EARLSTON

height of some 30 feet. The ruin has been in its present state for many years, and no person living can remember it when of larger proportions. Aged inhabitants stated to the author in his boyhood, that what apparently had been a kind of court-yard, or barbican, stretched eastwards to a distance of 40 yards or so, and that this was filled with great stone heaps gathered from the Tower as bit by bit it fell to the ground. These stones were used in the construction of dykes and neighbouring buildings, notably the Rhymer's Mill in the field adjoining, and the two red-roofed cottages nestling under the shadow of the Tower. The place is kept in good order, the relic preserved in the best manner possible.

Around the personality of Thomas of Ercildoune much controversy has gathered. There is, first of all, the question as to his real name. Some allege his surname to have been Learmont, a name common in Earlston up to fifty years ago. Nisbet, the heraldist, styles him "*Sir* Thomas Learmont of Ercildoune in the Merss," but on evidence wholly valueless. Hector Boece or Boyis (1465–1536) is the first Scottish historian who gives the Rhymer this name, but, as is well known, Boece's "Scotorum Historia" is largely blended with fictitious statements. In no extant charter is Thomas so described. When he is referring to himself there is no mention of the name Learmont. Persons of this name living in Earlston did, it is true, claim kinship with the Rhymer, and the right of burial close to Ercildoune Church (as the parish church is now known), in the wall of which is a very ancient stone with the inscription:

> "Auld Rymr race
> Lyees in this place."

The biographers of Russia's great poet, Mikhail Lermontoff (1814–1841), refer to his ancestral connection with Thomas of Ercildoune. In many of his poems Lermontoff proudly alludes to his Scottish lineage. In "The Wish," for instance, he longs to have the wings of a bird, that he might fly

> "To the West, to the West,
> Where shine the fields of my ancestors,
> Where, by the deserted Tower among the misty hills,
> Rests their forgotten dust."

But, after all, may it not be plausible to style Thomas by the surname of Rimour or Rimor not because he appears to have been skilled in the art of versifying, but because that was his *family name*? In the Merse in those days Rimour was a common appellation. It existed in the locality where Thomas lived. At Gordon and Dryburgh this name has been found on old tombstones and in ancient deeds. Moreover, he explicitly signs himself Rimor in the Bemersyde Charter (*c.* 1270), and his son is described as "son and heir of Thomas Rimour of Ercildoune." It may be mere coincidence that although his name was Rimour he should be in reality a *rhymer*, just in the same way as a clerk may bear the name of his profession.

The chief interest in connection with the story of this old-world figure is his celebrity as poet and prophet. Thomas of Ercildoune is usually accorded first place in point of time on the roll of Scotland's sons of song. He is the Scottish Chaucer, the founder and father of a school of native poetry. That he had a wide reputation as a poet is clear from the testimony of an English contemporary writer, Robert Mannyng of Brunne. In his "English Chronicle," a rhyming history of England written about 1330, Thomas of Ercildoune is commemorated as the author of an incomparable metrical romance on the story of "Sir Tristrem," and of this the historian asserts that "it is the best geste ever was or ever could be made, if minstrel could recite it as Thomas composed it." Among treasures discovered in the Advocates' Library by Ritson is what is known as the Auchinleck MS., presented to the Faculty in 1744 by Alexander Boswell, Lord of Session, father of Dr. Johnson's biographer. The manuscript contains upwards of forty old English romances and fragmentary poems. One of these is a version of "Sir Tristrem," which Sir Walter Scott regarded as the composition of Ercildoune. This he carefully edited in 1804, immediately after the publication of the "Minstrelsy." The opening stanza runs as follows:

> "I was at Ertheldun,
> With Tomas spak I there,
> There heard I rede in roun
> Who Tristrem gat and bere,
> Who was king with croun," etc.

Whatever connection the Rhymer had with this Scottish

BEMERSYDE

(*From an Engraving by J. M. W. Turner, R.A., sketched in 1831*)

The figures in the foreground are Scott, staff in hand, leaning on Lockhart; the lady is Miss Haig

copy of "Sir Tristrem," it must be remembered that the story was by no means original. It had appeared in many different versions on the Continent before the time of Thomas of Ercildoune, and was a favourite theme with the minstrel fraternity. The hero is one of the Knights of the Round Table, and the tale is a startling catalogue of his amours and adventures. Scott's contention, vigorously argued, is that credit must be given to the Rhymer for casting the romance into Lowland verse.

But in the popular estimation, Thomas was more a prophet than a poet, and is better remembered for his reputed powers of vaticination and for his intercourse with the Faëry realm than for any metrical romance with which his name is associated. There is no evidence to show that he himself assumed the character of a prophet, but even in his lifetime he was regarded as one who possessed the spirit of divination; and after his death such a belief grew with the years. Barbour, who wrote about 1375, refers to a prophecy of Thomas concerning the exploits and succession of Robert I. after Bruce had slain Comyn at Dumfries in 1306. Bishop Lamberton is introduced as saying:

> "I hop Thomas' prophecy
> Of Hersildoune sall verified be
> In him."

Bower, who died in 1449, has given a circumstantial account of the prediction of the Rhymer relative to the tragic death of Alexander III. at Kinghorn. He is affirmed to have foretold the Union of Scotland and England by one removed in the ninth degree from the Bruce's blood; and his weird spell is said to have been cast over places and families belonging to his own Border. Round about Earlston are Cowdenknowes, Bemersyde, and Carolside (see page 154), the subject either of the Rhymer's invective or his blessing. Of Cowdenknowes he is alleged to have uttered the couplet:

> "Vengeance, vengeance! when and where?
> Upon the house of Cowdenknowes, now and ever mair."

The curse of the Rhymer sits lightly on Cowdenknowes. It is one of the loveliest spots in the Scott Country. The very word has a magical effect on the spirit. It has been embalmed by pastoral melody, and carries us back to the folds and bughts

and ewe-milkings of Scotland's olden time. Who has not heard of the "bonnie broom o' the Cowdenknowes," in ballad and song of many versions? What is perhaps the earliest composition on the subject has a place in the "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border," and the lyrics of Robert Crawford and of Allan Ramsay's collection still have their popularity.

The mansion belongs to the sixteenth century, and is in the baronial style of the Elizabethan period. Carved on the lintel of the former principal doorway are the letters "S. I. H., V. K. H. 1574," indicating the names of Sir James Home, and his wife, Katherine Home, the V. standing for Uxor.

Queen Mary is known to have resided at Cowdenknowes, on her way from Craigmillar to Jedburgh. The Queen's Room is still called by her name. Close to the house, and forming the main entrance to it, is a large square tower, bearing the date of its erection, 1555, and abutting on the riverside the remains of a still older structure are seen. Sir Walter Scott frequently visited Cowdenknowes. (See his "Journal," September, 1826.) Bemersyde is the oldest inhabited house in this part of the Tweed Valley. For 800 years it has been the home of the Haigs, and a Haig is still in possession. (See page 154.) Thomas's benediction on this family has been marvellously fulfilled, though at times it appeared as if the old lines would belie themselves:

> "Tyde what may betyde,
> Haig shall be Haig of Bemersyde."

Beyond mere traditional reputation, however, there is not the remotest evidence to justify the ascription of any prophetic power to the Rhymer of Ercildoune, and as to the rational probability of the thing no argument is necessary. The reverence of the people for a man, extraordinary for his learning and, it may be, venerable for his years, seems to have been the sole foundation for Thomas's claim to rank among the prophets. The allegories of the poet were converted, as events chanced to suit, into prophecies of which he never dreamed; and the attributes of a seer being thus once fixed upon him, it is not surprising that in an age when all history was of a poetic structure, his name and authority should often have been fictitiously employed to throw into the commencement of historic narrations

those shadows of coming events of which poetry has made such frequent and happy use to heighten the curiosity with which we pursue their development.

The story of Thomas of Ercildoune would not be complete without reference to the tradition of his translation to Fairyland, and his meetings at Eildon Tree with the Fairy Queen. The Eildon Tree has long since disappeared, but the spot is marked by the old Eildon Tree Stone, as well as by a new inscribed Stone placed there by Melrose Literary Society in 1929, on the eastern slope of the Eildons, on the left side of the highway as it sweeps round to the west, going towards, and within two miles of, Melrose. There has come down to us, in four different manuscripts, a singular poem, with the name "Thomas off Ersseldoune," bearing ample testimony to his mystical lore. The Rhymer is represented on a bright May morning reclining on Huntlee Bankis near Eildon's triple height, when he descries a lady of exquisite beauty mounted on a dapple-grey palfrey, and most gorgeously habited. At first Thomas believes her to be the Virgin, but she assures him she is of "another countree." Soon he is lured away by the fair enchantress, and descending a secret passage at the Eildons, they journey on for three dark, dreary days until they arrive at the Court of Faëry, where Thomas dwells for seven years. At the expiry of that period he is permitted to return to his native earth, and as a proof of their intimacy Thomas receives from his captivator the gift of prophecy—the tongue that could not lie. Henceforth he is True Thomas.

Then there is the tradition of his disappearance from Leaderside ; the parading of the village street by hart and hind, which was to Thomas a token that his presence was required elsewhere ; how he followed them to the neighbouring forest, and was seen no more. Most people will be content to view his final departure as having occurred in the natural manner. For we find, according to a charter in the National Library of Scotland, that in the year 1294 the Tower of Thomas the Rhymer passed from his family to the Trinity House of Soltra as a benefaction from the Rhymer's son. It is tolerably certain, therefore, that the old Rimor—the Rhymer of the people—had passed about then from his well-known haunts, leaving behind him a wealth of

memory and of mystery, for which a true expiscation must remain ever hopeless.

Among other Earlston associations may be mentioned the following. Alexander Shields, the Covenanter, author of the "Hind Let Loose," and his brother Michael were natives of Haughhead, in the parish. Lady Grisell Baillie, the girl-heroine of Polwarth, and writer of the touching "Werena my Heart licht I wad Die," lies in the ancestral aisle at Mellerstain. The martyr, George Baillie of Jerviswood, was also Laird of Mellerstain *, where was born the celebrated botanist, George Sinclair (1786–1834). John Gowdie, D.D., Principal of Edinburgh University, was parish minister from 1704 to 1730, and William Mair, D.D., eminent ecclesiastical lawyer, from 1869 to 1903. James Sanson, part prototype of "Dominie Sampson," was a tutor at the Manse of Earlston, and licentiate of the Presbytery. Dr. Alexander Waugh, the London divine, was a pupil in the parish school. So was George Cupples, the novelist of the "Green Hand," the finest seafaring story in the English language. The Carters—Robert, Walter, Peter—great New York publishers were natives, and Alexander Anderson, who perished in Park's—his brother-in-law's—ill-fated expedition, was born at Earlston in 1770.

* It is not improbable that the name Mellerstain, originally Melokstane, Melocstane, or Mulukstane, suggests association with St. Cuthbert, whose Gaelic name is said to have been Mullucc. Wrangholm, the scene of his boyhood—and it may have been his birth spot—is close to Mellerstain.

Page 151.—At Carolside, A. W. Kinglake wrote a portion of his "Invasion of the Crimea."

Page 152.—The mansion of Bemersyde was purchased as a national gift to Douglas, first Earl Haig of Bemersyde, as a token of his services in the Great War (1914–1918). The estate itself belongs to the representatives of the late Lieut.-Col. Arthur Balfour Haig, C.M.G., C.V.O. Earl Haig died suddenly in London, and was laid to rest in his ancestral ground at Dryburgh Abbey, close to the tomb of Scott, February 7, 1928.

THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD

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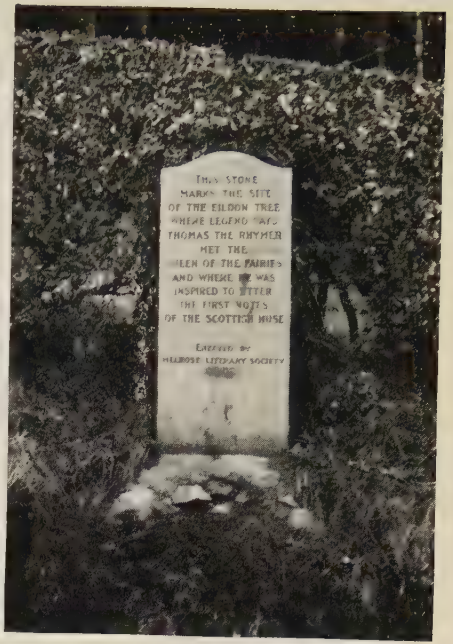


THE NEW EILDON TREE STONE:
OLD STONE ON THE LEFT

CHAPTER XVI

HOMES AND HAUNTS OF HOGG

IN one of the "Noctes Ambrosianæ" the Shepherd is made to express the hope that "when he is cauld in the mools there may be a bit monument to his memory in some quiet spot forneut Tibbie's dwelling." The visitor to St. Mary's knows how that wish has been realized in the massive freestone statue overlooking the waters of the lonely Lake. The poet is represented seated with his dog Hector at his side on an oak root, as if in deep meditation, his right hand grasping a stout shepherd's staff, and in his left a scroll, on which is inscribed the last line of the "Queen's Wake": "Have taught the wandering winds to sing." But it was not until a quarter of a century after the shepherds had borne all that was mortal of *the* Shepherd across his native hills to the green kirkyard of Ettrick that the proposal took definite shape, and became an accomplished fact. On June 28, 1860, in presence of a vast gathering from all parts of the Border country, and, as a few still recall, amidst a downpour of rain continuous and furious as seldom had been witnessed in Yarrowdale, the monument was inaugurated by Sheriff Glassford Bell, an attached friend of the bard, himself a singer of repute. The statue is the work of Andrew Currie of Darnick, Border sculptor and antiquary. Exactly thirty-eight years and one month after that event—on July 28, 1898—another commemoration of the Ettrick Shepherd took place at Ettrickhall, where he was born in 1770. Here, in the very heart of the Ettrick homeland, within a bowshot of Ettrick Kirk, had stood the little clay bigging of his birth, but demolished for many years, its site marked by a single stone in the adjoining dyke—part of the jamb of the old kitchen, with the letters "J. H." scratched on its surface. It was felt a pity that this should be the sole tangible reminder of James Hogg's birth-spot, and the subject of a worthier memorial presented itself. The Edinburgh Border Counties Association, which has

taken a deep practical interest in the literature of the Border and the preservation of its landmarks, applied itself to the task, and soon a large sum of money was contributed, and the monument put in skilful hands. Built of red Corsehill freestone, standing about 20 feet high, and carrying a bronze medallion of the poet, it forms a striking feature by the wayside, an honour to Ettrick and the Association under whose auspices it was set up.

To all such recognition the Ettrick Shepherd has a distinct claim. As a poet of the Borders it has been customary to rank him next to Scott and before Leyden in the triumvirate of Lowland bards. In the broader field of Scottish song he is a good second to Burns. But in many respects Hogg was a more astonishing man, and a more singular genius, than Burns. All the schooling he ever had was through in six months, and comprised the barest elements—a little reading, the Shorter Catechism, the Proverbs of Solomon, and a penmanship that was small use to him. At six years, that tender age when most children in the outlying districts are ventured to school for the first time, the future poet was herding a neighbour's cows, receiving for his half-year's wage a ewe lamb and a pair of shoes. An uphill struggle under the most trying circumstances, enough to quail the stoutest heart, had this herd boy of the Ettrick hills. But he had his secret—a kind of holy rapture—the consciousness of an aspiration, and a power unknown and unfelt by the plodding peasantry around him. There was one who had caught his secret. He had for mother a woman who knew something about the heroism of common life. She was of the type it is a joy to meet among the solitary glens of the Ettrick and Yarrow, or of the Tweed—a shepherd's wife, assiduous in daily duty, with a freshness of heart and a quickness of head that brighten toil. To Margaret Laidlaw, more than to Robert Hogg, was the young shepherd indebted for the moulding of his future. His continuation-school he found at his own fireside. His mother began to teach him during the evenings, and so well did she accomplish her task that he was able with comparative ease to peruse the books that came within his reach, and to master other subjects of study. It was owing to his mother—let us

HOGG'S MONUMENT AT ST. MARY'S

HOGG'S MONUMENT AT ETTRICKHALL

record the fact, for it means so much—that the witching spell of the Border was cast over his opening mind. Few were more familiar with its song and ballad literature. From the full treasure-house of his mother's memory he gathered and hoarded those golden seeds which in after years were to yield such abundant fruit. He was a poet from his mother's knee. He felt that somehow he lived above the common level. It was, no doubt, the lack of schooling which hindered success at an earlier period. Had he been a town's boy, with an average education, or born to a higher social heritage, the probability is he might never have blossomed into a poet. He would not have been the pet child of Nature. He would not have been the "Ettrick Shepherd"—"King of the Mountain and Fairy School." It was the straitened circumstances of his life, his lot cast amid the solitudes, the wealth of opportunity for Nature study, and the revelation of the Master-Bard himself, that woke within him the dream of becoming a singer of the people. The glamour of Border story took hold of Hogg as it took hold of Scott and Leyden in the obscure homesteads and amid the quiet, unobtrusive life of the Southern hills. He tells us himself about it:

"Oh, list the mystic lore sublime,
Of fairy tales of ancient time!
I learned them in the lonely glen,
The last abodes of living men,
Where never stranger came our way,
By summer night or winter day;
Where neighbouring hind or cot was none—
Our converse was with heaven alone—
With voices through the clouds that sung,
And brooding storms that round us hung. . . .
The undefined and mingled hum,
Voice of the desert, never dumb!
All these have left within this heart
A feeling tongue can ne'er impart;
A wildered and unearthly flame,
A something that's without a name."

Living thus the free, glad, healthful life of the uplands, in touch with Nature as day succeeded day, exploring the by-paths of Border romance and chivalry, and knowing something, too, of the gentler passions that fire the human breast, the Shepherd

passed from one stage of poetic experience to another. And then there came that time, in the spring of 1813, when the world was forced to listen to the pure strains of the harp that the Yarrow dens and the Ettrick glens had brought to full and perfect tune. Had Hogg written nothing but the "Queen's Wake," and of that only "Kilmeny," he would have well earned a secure place on the roll of Scottish Minstrels. It did not pay him in world's gear, but it brought him the richer inheritance of an imperishable name. So long as the Scottish tongue is spoken, so long will be sung the songs of the Ettrick Shepherd, so long will his memory be reverenced as the deep-taught visionary of the realm of Faëry, as the poet who has expressed, in a way scarcely any other bard has been able to do, the "awesomeness", the mystery that clothe and veil the supersensible from mortal eyes.

Hogg's life was mostly passed in Ettrick and Yarrow. By the time he was fifteen he had already served a dozen masters, changing always, not for any fault, but for higher work or "fee." Singlie on the Ettrick, Elibank by the Tweed, and Woolandslee on the Leithen Water, are places associated with Hogg during this period. At the age of twenty he entered the service of James Laidlaw of Blackhouse, at the head of the Douglas Burn, a tributary of the Yarrow. This was the father of Willie Laidlaw, who became his fast friend. Here Hogg began the writing of verse, and heard for the first time of Burns and "Tam o' Shanter." In 1800 he was back at Ettrick, assisting his parents, growing old and infirm. By 1801 he had produced his first publication—an unfortunate venture of which he says he was afterwards pretty much ashamed. But all the same it contains some good things. In 1802 he had his first meeting with Scott at Ettrickhall. Scott was gathering material for the "Minstrelsy," and through Laidlaw he had learned about Hogg and his mother. From the latter he obtained the ballad of "Auld Maitland," with which he expressed great delight. "Has it ever been printed?" he asked. "Oh, na, na, sir," replied the old lady; "there were never ane o' my sangs prentit till ye prentit them yoursel', an' ye hae spoilt them athegither. They were made for singing, an' no for reading; but ye hae broken the charm now, an' they'll never be

sung mair. An' the worst thing o' a', they're neither right spell'd nor right settin' doun." This friendship between Scott and Hogg ripened with the years, ending only at Scott's death. Many a kindness did the Shirra show his humbler brother of the muse, and the Shepherd obliged the Shirra in not a few ways. Their mutual regard was of the most sterling character, in spite of occasional outbursts, and Hogg paid manly poetical tributes to his more famous patron. After leading a kind of rambling, immethodical life for a time as shepherd, farmer, land-agent, and editor, during which he did a good deal of literary work, Hogg finally settled down in 1815 at Altrive, a small farm on the Yarrow, given him at a nominal rent by the Duke of Buccleuch. In 1820 he married Margaret Phillips, an Annandale woman of good family, twenty years his junior. She made him an excellent wife, and survived him thirty-five years, dying at Linlithgow in 1870. Not long after his marriage Hogg rented the farm of Mount Benger (the site is marked by a commemorative wayside tablet) on the north of the Yarrow opposite Altrive, but a seven years' lease proved a disastrous failure. Then he went back to Altrive, spending the closing years of his life in comparative comfort. The last meeting between Scott and Hogg took place in the autumn of 1830 at the Gordon Arms, the well-known inn on the Yarrow highway. "He sent me word," says Hogg, "that he was to pass on such a day on his way from Drumlanrig Castle to Abbotsford. I accordingly waited at the inn and handed him out of the carriage. His daughter was with him, but we left her at the inn, and walked slowly down the way as far as Mount Benger Burn. He then walked very ill indeed, for the weak limb had become almost completely useless; but he leaned on my shoulder all the way, and did me the honour of saying that he never leaned on a firmer or a surer. We talked of many things, past, present, and to come, but both his memory and onward calculation appeared to me then to be considerably decayed. I cannot tell what it was, but there was something in his manner that distressed me. He often changed the subject very abruptly, and never laughed. He expressed the deepest concern for my welfare and success in life more than I had ever heard him do before, and all mixed with sorrow for my worldly misfortunes. There is little doubt that his own

were then preying on his vitals. When I handed him into the coach that day, he said something to me which, in the confusion of parting, I forgot; and though I tried to recollect the words the next minute, I could not, and never could again. It was something to the purport that it was likely it would be long ere he leaned as far on my shoulder again. But there was an expression in it, conveying his affection for me, or his interest in me, which has escaped my memory for ever." Thus the two poets parted for the last time, appropriately enough in Yarrow —dear to Hogg, dearest vale to Scott.

In 1832 Hogg visited London, was fêted and lionized, and met Carlyle, who has thus described him: "Hogg is a little red-skinned stiff rock of a body, with quite the common air of an Ettrick shepherd, except that he has a highish though sloping brow (among his yellow grizzled hair) and two clear little beads of blue or grey eyes that sparkle, if not with thought, yet with animation. I felt interest for the poor 'herd body,' wondered to see him blown hither from his sheepfolds, and how, quite friendless as he was, he went along, cheerful, mirthful, and musical." Towards 1835 his health showed symptoms of failing. In July he had his last look on the scenes where he had spent the happiest ten years of his life. "I guessed," says his son, "as we wended our way up Douglas Burn, past the old tower and the farmhouse of Blackhouse, that he was taking his last look of them. We rode up to the stones that mark the graves of the seven brethren alluded to in the old ballad, at the top of the Risp Syke, and he took a long look at all the scenery which had been so familiar to him in days gone by. We then returned home, and I was right in my surmise, for he never saw Blackhouse again." By November of the same year he was laid beside his shepherd ancestors under the shadow of Ettrick Kirk, and amid the haunts of his youth. Over the grave his widow erected a simple stone surmounted by a little mountain harp. See p. 195. Ettrick guards his dust. Her name will keep *his* ever green.

CHAPTER XVII

YARROW AND ETTRICK

OPPOSITE the old court-house in Selkirk, where he performed official duties for two-and-thirty years, stands the statue of the "Shirra," Scott's familiar designation in Selkirkshire, or Ettrick Forest. "A speaking likeness," said one who came into daily contact with him. Dressed in his Sheriff's gown, his right hand leaning on his staff, and his head bare to all the winds (how touching when seen under a snowstorm!), one might almost fancy the lips as about to give utterance to his own beautiful lines graven beneath:

> "By Yarrow's streams still let me stray,
> Though none should guide my feeble way;
> Still feel the breeze down Ettrick break,
> Although it chill my wither'd cheek."

The monument, erected in August, 1839, is "in proud and affectionate remembrance of Sir Walter Scott, baronet, Sheriff of this County from 1800 to 1832." Than the "Forest" no bit of the Border was dearer to Scott. For the greater part of his life the "shaws" of Ettrick and "braes" of Yarrow were among his most cherished landmarks. In the "raiding" days, and afterwards, friendships were formed in every glen, and there could be no sincerer respect than that which Scott showed for the homely round of rustic life all about him. Never shepherd or plough-boy but felt at ease in the Shirra's presence. His was the most adorable figure in the Forest. The impress of Scott has stamped itself upon every "cleuch" of Ettrick, on every "hope" in Yarrow. And remembering the wealth of romantic story centring in these sister valleys, perhaps no district in Scotland has been the subject of a larger literature. It is certain that no river has been more besung than Yarrow. The name is redolent of all that is most pathetic and inspiring in Border poetry. The favourite haunt of Scott; the delight

of Wordsworth in his brief Border excursions; the happy abode of the Shepherd whose name for ever links the twin streams together; the holiday home of Christopher North and many of his academic successors, it is no surprise that Yarrow and Ettrick year after year attract to their dear and refreshing solitudes the rank and file of summer wanderers. For many, no holiday equals a holiday in Yarrow. Norman Macleod used to say that his "highest idea of earthly happiness was to spend a long summer's day in Yarrow, with a few choice friends, stretched at full length on the grassy sward, amidst the blooming heather, looking up to the bright sky and leisurely smoking a cigar, when the outer world was completely shut out, and the first person who spoke of Church affairs should be bastinadoed." Whence is the charm of Yarrow, and the secret of that undercurrent of melancholy running through its song? Why should Yarrow be the personification, so to speak, of poetic grief and despair? The emotion of the stream has been compared to a brief, bright morning full of promise, with the hills splendid and the heart glad, but ere noon there comes the cloud with its rain and tears, and the evening closes with only a memory of vanished joy. Almost all the Yarrow ballads have some such beginning and ending. And in modern verse there is the like irresistible, indefinable wail. Men of all minds, and of diverse gifts, have come under its spell, and in each the strain of sadness is the same. The ballad of the "Dowie Dens" expresses in its very title the leading idea of the whole. Hamilton of Bangour's exquisitely tender "Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny Bride," and John Logan's winsome lines beginning:

> Thy braes were bonnie, Yarrow stream!
> When first on thee I met my lover;
> Thy braes how dreary, Yarrow stream!
> When now thy waves his body cover,"

are an echo of the "Dowie Dens." Some verses of the latter Scott considered to be among the most poetic ever penned, such as these:

> "His mother from the window looked,
> With all the longing of a mother;
> His little sister weeping walk'd
> The greenwood path to meet her brother:

They sought him east, they sought him west,
They sought him all the Forest thorough ;
They only saw the cloud of night,
They only heard the roar of Yarrow."

Wordsworth's three Yarrows ; Henry Scott Riddell's stanzas on the " Dowie Dens " ; the effusions of the four professorial Johns—Wilson, Blackie, Shairp, and Veitch ; J. B. Selkirk's " Death in Yarrow," and his " Song of Yarrow " ; " Surfaceman's " " Yarrow Braes," and most of Scott's and Hogg's references, all breathe the spirit that seems alone to hang over this vale of dule and sorrow. And away behind these modern singers are the old minstrels with their love-lorn tales ending chiefly in tragedies and tears. " Willie's Drowned in Yarrow " is full of touching sentiment and melting pathos :

" Willie's rare and Willie's fair,
And Willie's wondrous bonny,
And Willie's hecht to marry me,
Gin e'er he married ony.

" Yestreen I made my bed fu' braid,
This night I'll make it narrow,
For a' the livelong winter night
I'll lie twin'd of my marrow.

" She sought him east, she sought him west,
She sought him braid and narrow ;
Syne, in the cleaving of a craig
She fand him drown'd in Yarrow."

It is impossible to touch more than a fringe of the " secret " of Yarrow, or to chronicle even a tithe of those

" High souls, come and gone, who on these braes have thrown
The light of their glorious fancies,
And left their words to dwell and mingle with the spell
Of a thousand old romances."

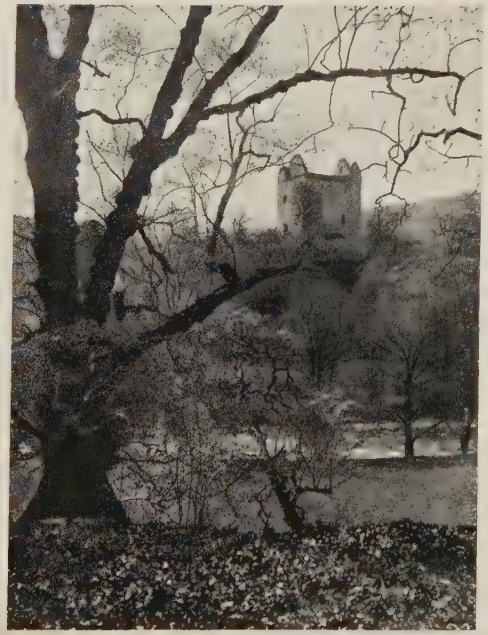
The Yarrow of song and of reality are not different. At first sight that may appear so, but a closer acquaintance reveals the strong, sterling relationship existing between them. Wordsworth's apostrophe comes naturally to our lips :

" And is this—Yarrow ?—*This* the stream
Of which my fancy cherished,
So faithfully, a waking dream ?
An image that hath perished !

O that some minstrel's harp were near
To utter notes of gladness,
And chase this silence from the air
That fills my heart with sadness!
Yet why? a silvery current flows
With uncontrolled meanderings;
Nor have these eyes by greener hills
Been soothed, in all my wanderings."

For the Yarrow and Ettrick valleys our starting-point is Selkirk, the county town and capital of the Forest. Picturesquely situated on the steep hillside overhanging the Ettrick, graced with wealth of greenwood and architectural charm, the place is not inaptly described as having somewhat the look of an ancient Italian city. A neat, well-built, well-kept, healthy, prosperous town Selkirk is. Like Hawick and Galashiels, it is mostly a creation of the by-past century, the result of the introduction and rapid extension of the tweed industry. Its origin takes us back to the time of Eata and Cuthbert at Old Melrose, and the Culdee Christianizing of Tweedside. It has been stated, but is of course erroneous, that "Ceolfrid, Abbot of Yarrow,"* mentioned in Bede's "History," was the pioneer of the Gospel in Selkirkshire. With the growth of the historical Forest, and its popularity as a royal hunting-ground, there arose the hamlet of hunters' huts and primitive sanctuary known by the name of Schelechyrch, "the kirk of the shielings," gradually softened to the modern Selkirk. Although spoken of as an old town in the time of David I., with his reign its history properly begins. That was the great ecclesiastical era in early Scottish story. While yet Prince of Cumbria, David founded at Selkirk, in 1113, the Tironensian Abbey, afterwards transferred to Kelso (see p. 23). The hunting-seat, of which little is known, bore the designation of Castle and was occupied frequently by William the Lion, Alexander II., and Alexander III. By the time of the Bruce it ceased to be a royal residence, and soon passed into extinction. In the Kirk of the Forest, assumed to be that of Selkirk, though possibly the Church of St. Mary in Yarrow, Wallace was, in 1298, elected Governor of Scotland. At the disastrous battle of Falkirk, in the same year, the Selkirk Foresters, fine, tall men, and fearless fighters, fell to a man by

* Yarrow is Jarrow-on-Tyne, a celebrated monastic seat.



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NEWARK TOWER

SELKIRK

the side of their leader, Sir John Stewart. Two centuries later the Flodden calamities clouded the heart of Scotland. According to tradition, eighty well-armed men from Selkirk, headed by William Brydone, the town clerk, marched to the fatal field, where most of them perished. An English standard brought home by the survivors adorns the walls of the Free Library, and, as at Hawick, the memory of Flodden is a feature of the annual Common-Riding festival. In revenge for their gallantry the English sacked Selkirk, leaving it in ruins. Under James V., it regained its former importance by new charter rights, large gifts of land, and liberty to cut down as much wood as was required for rebuilding. Selkirk's coat of arms is said to depict an incident of the return from Flodden. " One of the burgher's wives," an old chronicler writes, " went out with a child, thinking long for her husband, and was found dead at the root of a tree, and the child sucking her breast, on the rising ground which is called Ladywood Edge to this day." It is more than likely that the figures represent the Virgin and child, a relic of the town's monastic memories. The fight at Philiphaugh, September 13, 1645, the last of the great Border battles, is closely connected with Selkirk. There General David Leslie surprised and put to rout the Royalist troops under Montrose, forcing the Great Marquis to an ignominious flight across Minchmoor. His quarters in Selkirk on the eve of the battle are still pointed out, and an ivy-circled cairn within the grounds of Philiphaugh commemorates the heroes of the Covenent.

The literary associations of Selkirk are historically interesting. Flodden and Philiphaugh survive in song and ballad lore. " The Battle of Philiphaugh," first published in the " Minstrelsy "—a crude and " fusionless " production, much inferior to the common run of Yarrow verse—was somehow a favourite with Scott, who was fond of quoting the opening lines :

> " On Philiphaugh a fray began,
> At Harehead wood it ended ;
> The Scots out o'er the Graemes they ran,
> Sae merrily they bended."

The old gathering-cry and well-known rhyme,

> " Up wi' the Souters o' Selkirk,
> And doon wi' the Earl of Home !

And up wi' a' the braw lads
That sew the single-soled shoon," etc.,

popularly supposed to refer to Flodden, is certainly of subsequent origin.*

The " Flowers of the Forest " is the dirge that will abide the song-memorial of that fateful day :

" Dule and wae for the order sent our lads to the Border,
The English for ance by guile wan the day ;
The Flowers of the Forest that fought aye the foremost,
The prime of our land are cauld in the clay."

And " Selkirk after Flodden," by J. B. Selkirk, full of the old minstrel emotion, has a secure place in the literature of shattered hopes and joys :

" Miles and miles round Selkirk toun,
Where forest flow'rs are fairest,
Ilka lassie's stricken doun
Wi' the fate that fa's the sairest.
A' the lads they used to meet
By Ettrick braes or Yarrow,
Lyin' thrammelt head and feet
In Brankstone's deadly barrow !
O Flodden Field ! "

A loyal son of the Forest, there have been few keener students of its history, and no better interpreter of the Yarrow feeling. His " Song of Yarrow " is as fine as any of Wordsworth's contributions to the poetry of the stream. " Looking back in Yarrow " —a golden wedding in genial if sad retrospect ; and " Death in Yarrow "—a widower's wail for the light of his eyes suddenly quenched—are the work of the most notable recent bard of the Border (d. Christmas Day, 1904). Of Andrew Lang (1844–1912), Selkirk-born, Borderers have reason for pride. Amid the grind

* The town rose into prominence during the eighteenth century for its manufacture of shoes. In 1745 the authorities were able to supply the army of Charles Edward with over 2,000 pairs. It was through this industry that the inhabitants became known as " souters "—that is, shoemakers. To be made a souter of Selkirk is the ordinary phrase for being made a burgess, and the candidate for that honour is always compelled to " lick the birse," passing it through his mouth. Though of older date than Flodden, the twenty lines which are recovered may be a link between that battle and some more recent circumstance. A football match—unlikely enough—has been alleged as the occasion. See Introduction to the verses in the " Minstrelsy " and Chambers's " Songs of Scotland."

of London literary life it was his joy to snatch the opportunity for refreshing his youth-time memories and quickening the "Borderesqueness" of his heart in those delightful little lyrics which are, perhaps, his best legacy to the country of his love and of his dreams. Lang was never more at home, and his verse rang not to a truer or a more romantic note than when the Muse of Tweed and Yarrow inspired his pen:

"Three crests against the saffron sky,
Beyond the purple plain,
The kind remembered melody
Of Tweed once more again.

"Wan water from the Border hills
Dear voice from the old years,
Thy distant music lulls and stills,
And moves to quiet tears.

"Like a loved ghost thy fabled flood
Fleets through the dusky land;
Where Scott, come home to die, has stood,
My feet returning stand.

"A mist of memory broods and floats,
The Border waters flow;
The air is full of ballad notes,
Borne out of long ago.

"Old songs that sung themselves to me,
Sweet through a boy's day-dream,
While trout below the blossom'd tree
Plashed in the golden stream.

* * * *

"Twilight, and Tweed, and Eildon Hill,
Fair and too fair you be;
You tell me that the voice is still
That should have welcomed me."

Selkirk boasts yet another singer, not so well known as he might be—Andrew Mercer, author of "Summer Months among the Mountains," and other works. He died at Dunfermline in 1842. In the old Forest Inn, long demolished, its site marked by a slab in the wall, Burns wrote, in 1787, his "Epistle to Creech." Mungo Park began life as a surgeon's apprentice at Selkirk, and the statue of the traveller stands opposite the house of his early training. Dr. Ebenezer Clarkson, Scott's medical

attendant, was the Gideon Gray * of the " Surgeon's Daughter," Selkirk the Middlemas of the novel. Mrs. Anderson, wife of Dr. Thomas Anderson, and her sister—Scotts of Deloraine—were prototypes of Minna and Brenda in the " Pirate." † " Many a pair of sisters, blonde and brune, have we met in fiction since Minna and Brenda, but none have been their peers, and, like Mordaunt in early years, we know not to which of them our hearts are given." Thus Andrew Lang. In the theological world Professor Lawson and the Selkirk Divinity Hall are prominent landmarks.‡ " More like the twin brother of the Athenian Socrates than any man I have ever ocularly seen," said Carlyle of the Selkirk sage. It may be recalled, too, that John Welch, of Ayr, Knox's son-in-law, from whom Mrs. Carlyle claimed descent, was minister of Selkirk from 1589 to 1594. Nor must we forget Thomas Craig-Brown, chronicler of the Forest, ex-Provost, man of public spirit, antiquary, with whom the traditions of Yarrow and Ettrick were familiar as household words. His " History of Selkirkshire " is a mine of valuable information, and a model of the manner in which such a task should be accomplished. Tom Scott, R.S.A. (died 1928), was the most notable water-colour artist in the Border country. His canvases depicting favourite landscapes, and spots of note associated with Sir Walter, are in many prized collections throughout the world. A bust to his memory has been placed on his birth-house in the High Street.

Now we turn to the hills " whence classic Yarrow flows." It is impossible to dwell here, with any fullness, on the numberless associations which lie before us in this matchless itinerary. The Yarrow literature is legion, but the reader will find the best of " guides " in Angus's " Ettrick and Yarrow " and Dr. Russell's " Reminiscences," whilst the life-stories of Hogg and Wilson, the ringing verses of the balladists, with the more stately measures of Scott and Wordsworth, cast their glamour over the quietest recesses of the valley.

* See " Our Gideon Grays " and Note by Dr. John Brown in " Horæ Subsecivæ," first series, for an excellent account of a day in the life of Dr. Thomas Anderson, of Selkirk, Park's brother-in-law.

† For portraits see " The Scott Originals," pp. 304, 308.

‡ See " The Life and Times of George Lawson, D.D. (1749–1820)." By the Rev. John Macfarlane, LL.D., London.

MUNGO PARK

FOULSHIELS

A little over two miles from Selkirk we pass Philiphaugh, already mentioned, the erstwhile home of the Murrays, the most ancient family in the Forest, tracing descent from that Archibald de Moravia whose signature appears on the Ragman Roll of 1296. The holders of vast estates in Selkirkshire and elsewhere, boasting, as the ballad has it :

" Fair Philiphaugh is mine by right,
And Lewinshope still mine shall be ;
Newark, Foulshiels, and Tinnis baith
My bow and arrow purchased me ;
And I have native steads to me,
The Newark Lea and Hangingshaw ;
I have mony steads in the Forest schaw,
But them by name I dinna knaw "—

not one acre now remains to them. They have almost entirely died out, and are little more than a memory by Yarrowside.

No part of the valley is more picturesque than by Philiphaugh and Bowhill. " Rich groves of lofty stature, with Yarrow winding through the pomp of cultivated nature." Such is the description of the enraptured Wordsworth. The hills almost to the summit are clad with banks of elm and oak, fir, and beech, and rowan, intermingled with copses of hazel and laburnum, wild-rose and broom. Harewood glen, by the river-side, is in one of its prettiest nooks. Here, again, Wordsworth sings of it as being full of

" Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,
For sportive youth to stray in ;
For manhood to enjoy his strength :
And age to wear away in ! "

It was just about here Scott encountered Park intently sounding the dark, silent pools of the Yarrow, dreaming, doubtless, of fresh discoveries in that far land to which his heart had gone out.

" And, rising from those lofty groves,
Behold a ruin hoary !
The shattered front of Newark's towers,
Renowned in Border story."

The recital of the " Lay " is placed at Newark :

" He passed where Newark's stately Tower
Looks down from Yarrow's birchen bower
The Minstrel gazed with wistful eye—
No humbler resting-place was nigh ;

With hesitating step at last
The embattled portal arch he passed,
Whose ponderous gate and massy bar
Had oft rolled back the tide of war,
But never closed the iron door
Against the desolate and poor."

Scott had a peculiar affection for the old fortalice, and would fain have fitted it up as a residence. Hither he was accustomed to conduct his Abbotsford guests, and his last look at the storied stream was from Newark with Wordsworth in 1831 :

" Once more by Newark's Castle gate,
Long left without a warder,
I stood, looked, listened, and with Thee—
Great Minstrel of the Border ! "

Built about 1466 as a hunting-lodge for James III., it passed to the Buccleuch family early in the next century, and was their seat for years. Burned by the English in 1548, the tower was restored, and is still in excellent preservation. The mounds of its predecessor, built in the reign of Alexander III., and known as Auldwark, are still traceable ; and, hard by, the Slain Men's Lea is a reminder of a regrettable incident after Philiphaugh on the part of the Covenanting conquerors—the butchery of a large number of their prisoners in the Castle courtyard. Opposite Newark, and close to the highway, the roofless farm-cottage of Foulshiels, the birthplace of Mungo Park, attracts the eye. Born in the same year as Scott, and, like him, the seventh son of a family of thirteen, Park was destined by his parents for the ministry, but preferred medicine. At the age of fifteen he became apprenticed to Dr. Thomas Anderson, the Selkirk surgeon, and at twenty-one he received his diploma from the Edinburgh College. For a time he acted as ship's doctor in the East Indies. In May, 1795, he sailed in the service of the African Association for the coast of Senegal, with the object of solving the secret of the Niger. After an absence of two and a half years, he returned to England on Christmas Day, 1797. In this cottage at Foulshiels he compiled most of the narrative of his travels, which appeared in the spring of 1799. In August he married the eldest daughter of Dr. Anderson. In 1801 we find him settled as a surgeon in Peebles, where he felt entirely

out of his element. He told Scott that he would rather brave Africa and its horrors than wear his life done in toilsome rides amongst the hills for the scanty remuneration of a country doctor. In 1805 he again resolutely set his face toward the Niger. But little more than a year afterwards, having passed through many perils and privations, his expedition broken up, the two Forest friends who had accompanied him dead, and amidst growing opposition from the native tribes, he perished by drowning in the rapids at Boussa. His last message home was in these words: "My dear friend Mr. Anderson, and likewise Mr. Scott,* are both dead; but though the Europeans who were with me were dead, and though I myself were half dead, I would still persevere, and if I could not succeed in the object of my journey, I would at last die on the Niger." Justly has Joseph Thomson—an intrepid explorer himself—summed up the character of this manliest of Border heroes, the first of the knight-errantry of Africa: "For actual hardship undergone, for dangers faced, and difficulties overcome, together with an exhibition of the virtues which make a man great in the rude battle of life, Mungo Park stands without a rival." A tablet to his memory was placed in the front wall of Foulshiels by Dr. Henry Anderson, of Selkirk, and in 1859 a handsome monument by Currie of Darnick was erected in the High Street. There will be few who can be untouched with the pathos of the Foulshiels ruin—so tangible commentary on the truth that

> "Honour and worth from no condition rise;
> Act well your part, there all the honour lies!"

Broadmeadows, a little further on, recalls the murder of the "dark Knight of Liddesdale" mentioned in the "Lay," who was slain by his kinsman, Earl Douglas, "in the heich of the edge beside Broadmeadows," in revenge for the Hermitage Castle tragedy (see p. 57); † and Sir Walter's ambition to

* Alexander Anderson, his brother-in-law, born at Earlston in 1770, died of dysentery at Sansanding, October 28, 1805. George Scott, son of the tenant in Singlie, died of fever at Koomikoomi before reaching the river.

† Sir William Douglas, of Liddesdale, flourished during the reign of David II., and was so distinguished for his valour that he was called the "Flower of Chivalry." His renown was tarnished by the murder of Dalhousie. His own murder, at the hands of his godson, occurred in

become "laird of the cairn and the scaur." While he was writing the "Lay" in 1804, it seemed probable that Broadmeadows would be in the market, and in the company of Lord and Lady Dalkeith he rode round it, "when summer smiled on sweet Bowhill," surveying the beautiful little domain with wistful eyes, and anticipating that

> "Then would he sing achievements high
> And circumstance of chivalry,
> Till the rapt traveller would stay,
> Forgetful of the closing day;
> And noble youths, the strain to hear,
> Forsook the hunting of the deer;
> And Yarrow, as he rolled along,
> Bore burden to the Minstrel's song."

The trim flower-dressed hamlet of Yarrowford, whence the old mountain path across Minchmoor strikes off, is now passed, with the site of Hangingshaw Castle, where reigned in rude magnificence the "Outlaw" of the most pictorial of Border ballads:

> "There's a fair castelle, bigged wi' lyme and stane;
> O! gin it stands not pleasauntlie!
> In the fore front o' that castelle fair,
> Twa unicorns are bra' to see;
> There's the picture of a knight, and a ladye bright,
> And the grene hollin abune their brie.
>
> "There an Outlaw keepis five hundred men;
> He keepis a royalle cumpanie!
> His merrymen are a' in ae liverye clad,
> O' the Lincome grene sae gaye to see;
> He and his ladye in purple clad,
> O! gin they lived not royallie!" *

"Wallace's Trench," on the height to the north of Hanging-

1353. His body lay for a night in Lindean Church, now in ruins, near Selkirk, and was then buried in Melrose Abbey. A cross, known as "William's Cross," marked the spot of his assassination.

* See the ballad or "Sang of the Outlaw" in the "Minstrelsy." The popular tradition is that John Murray of Philiphaugh, having been appointed custos of Newark, attempted to hold the Castle against the King, but finding the royal forces arrayed against him, he yielded up possession, and was created Sheriff of the Forest. The date given is 1509. Scott maintained, on clear grounds, that Hangingshaw, and not Newark, was the scene of the ballad. Not one stone of the tower is left upon another.

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DRYHOPE TOWER

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YARROW KIRK AND MANSE

shaw, between the Tweed and Yarrow tributaries—the Peel or Glenkinnon Burn and Hangingshaw Burn—introduces an interesting historical figure to the Forest. Here Wallace lay for a time in 1297 after his early Clydeside experiences, enlisting many Borderers to his ranks, and by-and-by setting out to be the Deliverer of his country,

> "Armed with matchless might,
> Gentle in peace, but terrible in fight."

Passing onwards a mile or two by Tinnis and Deuchar,* names enshrined in Border story, we reach the cosy, neat Kirk of Yarrow, the next notable landmark in the vale. A plain building, erected apparently in 1640, many memories cluster around it. Here Scott occasionally worshipped. At Ashestiel he was a parishioner of Yarrow. The name was dear to his heart. His maternal great-grandfather, John Rutherford, who had been schoolmaster of Selkirk, was minister of the parish from 1691 to 1710. Many a time did Scott during his Yarrow journeys halt awhile at what he styled the "shrine of his ancestors." A tablet in the north wall, with Latin inscription by Professor Rutherford—Scott's grandfather—is worth noting. Rendered into English it reads: "To the memory of the Rev. Mr. John Rutherford, a most worthy and watchful minister of the Church at Yarrow, and of his son Robert, aged four years, Christian Shaw, his bereaved spouse, caused this monument to be set up. He died May 8, 1710, in the 19th year of his ministry, and 69th of his age. Thou wert a faithful pastor, an affectionate father, a reliable friend, a considerate master, a devoted husband and son-in-law. Having fulfilled the duties of a blameless and pure life in years pleasantly spent, thou hast bowed to the Divine will. O thrice happy, thy fame is above the mountain peaks and green banks of Yarrow, thy spirit beyond the stars!"

James Hogg was a regular worshipper at Yarrow Kirk. By far the most notable of its long line of incumbents, whose names

* The old Bridge of Deuchar, with broken, ivy-mantled arch, standing out into the stream, forms a romantic-looking picture, and has caught the fancy of more than one artist. Near by are the sites of Deuchar Tower and Chapel. Deuchar Swire, a hill-path leading from this point by way of Traquair to the Tweed valley, is conjectured to be the scene of the combat which forms the groundwork of the famous "Dowie Dens" ballad.

were household words in Yarrowdale, were the Russells, father and son, ministers of Yarrow for close on a century (1791–1883), both D.D.'s, Lord High Commissioner's chaplains, men of marked preaching ability and spiritual power. To Dr. James Russell we are indebted for that charming Border classic, the "Reminiscences of Yarrow." Dr. Robert Borland, sometime also minister of the parish, carried on the literary succession in his volumes, "Yarrow, its Poets and Poetry," and "Border Raids and Reivers."

From Yarrow Manse we may enter the Ettrick Valley by the steep Kershope Swire, passing the ancient Tower of Kirkhope, a Harden stronghold, still well preserved. But proceeding up the Yarrow, we are soon in the centre of what is the true locale of the "Dowie Dens." Yarrow and the "Dowie Dens" are linked inseparably. Whether the phrase applies to the whole valley, or to the black pools of the river between Harehead and Bowhill, or is to be taken as covering merely the reputed scene of the ballad so named, it is difficult to determine. Standing at a point on the highway about half a mile from the Manse, the hill-line will be found to enclose a fairly complete circle, which is regarded as being at least a kind of geographical definition. On a dull day, and remembering its den-like character, we may easily have in this suggestion an explanation of the well-worn phrase. For the tradition, however, Dr. Robert Russell's account in the "Statistical Report of the Parish" for 1833 is the best :

"There is a piece of ground," he writes, "lying to the west of Yarrow Kirk, which appears to have been the scene of slaughter and sepulchre. From time immemorial it was a low, waste moor, till twenty-five years ago, when formed into a number of cultivated enclosures. On more than twenty different spots were large cairns, in many of which fine yellow dust, and in one an old spear, was found. Two unhewn, massive stones still stand about one hundred yards distant from each other, and which, doubtless, are the monuments of the dead. The real tradition simply bears that here a deadly feud was settled by dint of arms; the upright stones mark the place where the two lords or leaders fell, and the bodies of their followers were thrown into a marshy pool called the Dead Lake in the adjoining haugh. It is probable that this is the locality of the 'Dowie Dens of Yarrow.'"

There are four stones in all, and the unearthing of a number of "cists" containing human remains, together with discoveries

at the beginning of last century, seem to point to the place as an early battle-scene and burial-ground. The first stone is by Whitehope burnside, adjoining the churchyard; the second stands close to the Warrior's Rest cottage; the third is in a field of the glebe; the fourth, a little further up, is the famous "inscribed stone," the subject of much scholarly inquiry. "When the cultivation of the moor began," continues Dr. Russell, "the plough struck upon a large flat stone of unhewn graywacke, bearing a Latin inscription. Bones and ashes lay beneath it, and on every side the surface presented verdant patches of grass." It has been examined by Scott, Leyden, Park, Dr. J. A. Smith, Sir James Young Simpson, Sir Daniel Wilson, Professors Veitch and Rhys,* and others. One of the latest readings is Mr. Craig-Brown's:

HIC MEMORIAE CETI LOI NENNIQ FII PRINCI P ET I NUDI DUMNOGENI—HIC JACENT IN TUMULO DUO FILII LIBERALIS.	Here is the monument of Cetilous and Nennus, sons of Nudd, Dumnonian prince and emperor. Here lie buried the two sons of Liberalis.

There is no connection whatever with this stone and the "Dowie Dens" story. Scott is responsible for the suggestion that it "probably records the event of the combat." He was the first who lifted the ballad from the mobile lips of the people, and gave it a place among written song in his "Minstrelsy," and his enthusiasm for "localized Romance" led him to accept the site in question. Its circumstantial character, no doubt, appealed to him; and, ignorant of the inscription, he jumped to the conclusion that it was no other than the scene of the tragedy. Dr. Rhys is of opinion that the stone dates back to the fifth or sixth century, while the ballad incident is probably of the seventeenth century.†

To the popular mind the spot will have no other association.

* Principal Sir John Rhys's reading is as follows: Hic memoriæ [l]eti in bello insignissimi principes Nudi Dumnogeni. Hic jacent, etc.—"Here to the memory of the slain in the battle of the most illustrious prince Nudus of the Dumnogeni. Here lie buried," etc.

† See Craig-Brown's "Selkirkshire," where the question is discussed, and extracts given from the Selkirk Presbytery Record of date 1616, which seem to throw considerable light on the subject.

The spell of the past hundred years is not likely to be broken, or the pictures of the balladist to become less vivid and pathetic. How much of womanly winsomeness and heroism, of knightly dignity and daring, and the "unconquerable strength of love," are portrayed in the following stanzas! There are few ballads in any language that match its strains:

"She kiss'd his cheek, she kaim'd his hair,
As oft she had done before, O;
She belted him with his noble brand,
And he's away to Yarrow.

* * * * *

"'If I see all, ye're nine to ane;
And that's an unequal marrow;
Yet will I fight, while lasts my brand,
On the bonnie banks o' Yarrow.'

"Four has he hurt, and five has slain,
On the bloody braes of Yarrow,
Till that stubborn knight came him behind,
And ran his body thorough.

* * * * *

"'Yestreen I dream'd a dolefu' dream;
I fear there will be sorrow!
I dream'd I pu'd the heather green,
Wi' my true love on Yarrow.'

* * * * *

"She kiss'd his cheek, she kaim'd his hair,
She search'd his wounds all thorough;
She kiss'd them till her lips grew red,
On the dowie houms of Yarrow." *

But we must hurry on. Here is Yarrowfeus, a holiday haunt of uncommon attractiveness. About a mile further we have pointed out to us the site of Hogg's Mount Benger, not a stone left on another. "It was a gey cauld place," he remarks in the "Noctes," "stannan' yonder on a knowe in a funnel in the thoroughfare of a perpetual sough." But kindly memories clustered about it. "It was cheerfu', too, in the sun-glints, and hallowed be the chaumer in which my bairns were born." Hogg's tenancy was a vexing failure—so much so that his daughter writes of it as "of all the misfortunes which befell him the worst

* See the Yarrow papers by Professor Veitch in "Border Essays," and Sir Noel Paton's six pictures from the ballad—one of his happiest productions.

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ST. MARY'S CHURCHYARD

MEGGETFOOT AND ST. MARY'S LOCH

and most lasting in its effects." "It clouded his remaining years with difficulties which he was never able altogether to surmount." Nevertheless some splendid literary work was done here, and in the first two years his earnings were upwards of £750. The Gordon Arms (see p. 159) is a little beyond. Across the steep Eldin Swire to the left, leading into Ettrick, Hogg's funeral passed in 1835. Near by is his Altrive, now called Eldinhope. The kitchen and study—the room in which Hogg died—of the old farmhouse, are incorporated in the modern building. On the Yarrow highway we pass close to the little school, the successor to that which Hogg founded about 1823, a lasting memorial of his thoughtfulness for the children, remembering his own early disadvantages. Memories of the Shepherd come to us at every hand. Hogg is the presiding genius of the Yarrow and Ettrick glens, as Scott is of the Tweed. His character shines out as that of a true son of Nature, "alive," as Professor Aytoun puts it, "to every kindly impulse, and fresh at the core to the last," a straightforward, manly, lovable figure in the most real sense, notwithstanding the nonsense of the "Noctes," and the stupid, spleenful criticisms which have been heaped upon him. Even Lockhart is forced to admit that Hogg was the "most remarkable man who ever wore the maud of a shepherd"; and to Veitch's exclamation, "When shall we see such another Shepherd?" there is but one reply.

Now we are at the Craig-of-Douglas and the "wan water" of the Douglas Burn, on the threshold of a song-land as full and rich as any in this *sanctum sanctorum* of Romance. Not a nook that we have passed but is the scene of some tragic or romantic incident, many of them remembered, more forgotten. The bracken on the brae-face and the heather are hardly more indigenous. To lose the sheen of "lone Saint Mary's" could not be more startling than to have a romanceless Yarrow. Up the Douglas Glen a couple of miles or so, in the heart of the hills, but not the wild, desolate region fancy has pictured, stands the shattered Keep of the good Sir James of Douglas, Bruce's favourite soldier and friend, who strove to carry his heart to the Holy Land. Here was the early home of that "tender and true" race whose names are blazoned high in old Scottish story. Here, too, tradition locates the "Douglas

Tragedy." The bridle-path between Yarrow and Tweed by which the lovers fled from the pursuing brothers is still traceable among the bent and ling ; and higher on the moor, at the head of the Risp Syke, are the grey weird stones which mark the spot where Margaret Douglas

> " Held his steed in her milk-white hand,
> And never shed one tear,
> Until that she saw her seven brethren fa',
> And her father hard fighting, who loved her so dear." *

Blackhouse is dear to us for Hogg's ten happy years on its heathery Heights and his winsome companionship with gentle Willie Laidlaw. On the Hawkshaw Rig he heard for the first time of Coila's Bard, and set himself to croon verses of his own composing. It was here he mastered the early lessons of that " mountain and fairy school " of which he became Interpreter-in-Chief :

> " The Queen of the Fairies, rising silently
> Through the pure mist, stood at the Shepherd's feet,
> And half forgot her own green Paradise
> Far in the bosom of the hill—so wild,
> So sweet, so sad, flowed forth that Shepherd's lay."

From Blackhouse, through the Hawkshaw Doors, where Scott had his first vision of St. Mary's Loch, to " Dryhope's ruined Tower," the home of his ancestress, the Flower of Yarrow, is a pleasant hill-side saunter. Besung by Allan Ramsay and many a nameless minstrel, Mary Scott is more than a poetic figure in the galaxy of Border song. As the wife of Harden's marauding chief, how well did she play her part in the living history of the Border ! and was not a goodly portion of her indomitable spirit reproduced in the descendant who shed abiding lustre around the name of Scott ?

Of the Kirk of St. Mary's, the scene of bridals and burials and so many tragedies untold, not a trace remains. Far up on the height it stood, commanding a rare prospect of the Loch

* The stones are of older origin than the Tragedy. There are eleven in all—three still standing, the rest lying flat on the ground. They form, doubtless, a Druidical circle, or other prehistoric relic. It may be noted that this ballad, though localized on the Douglas Burn, is, in various versions, widely diffused throughout Europe, and is specially well-known in Scandinavia, as are also the plots and incidents of most of the Border ballads.

and the bright serpentine bend of the Yarrow. Through the thick bracken clumps is the only means of approach. Nothing is left but the little kirkyard and a few mounds concealing earlier masonry of the once fair fane. A cluster of birk and rowan trees lends just a touch of softness to a scene inexpressibly drear and "dowie." A more secluded, shelterless sleeping-place it would be difficult to find. Yet no Yarrow student should miss a spot so unusually rich in legendary association. The situation is about as perfect as one could wish. Romance rings it round, and the natural features are bold and beautiful.

"What boon to lie, as now I lie,
And see in silver at my feet
Saint Mary's Lake, as if the sky
Had fallen 'tween those hills so sweet,
And this old churchyard on the hill,
That keeps the green graves of the dead,
So calm and sweet, so lone and still,
And but the blue sky overhead."

How exquisite the play of light and shade on the solemn bare hills, changing colour with every shifting cloud and every gleam of sunshine! "Bowerhope's lonely top," in clear contour immediately opposite, seems to wear a double grace of symmetry, and of that earthly paradise at its foot one *has* a sort of sympathy with its whilom tenant, who declared, as the story goes, that he "could take a lease o't to a' eternity at a reasonable rent." Yonder, at the head of the Loch nestles the well-known hostelry snug and homely, of the immortal Tibbie. The dark background of Riskinhope, the heights around Birkhill and the Grey Mare's Tail, with the White Coomb and Bodsbeck in the distance, recall many a memory, literary and historic. Nearer hand, at the mouth of the sequestered vale of Megget, hunted by the Scottish monarchs from Kenneth the Grim to Queen Mary, and haunted by the ghosts of the freebooters, is the wooded knoll which marks the site of Henderland Chapel. Here lie "Perys of Cokburne and hys wyfe Marjory." That most touching of ballads, the "Lament of the Border Widow," was long believed to be founded on the tradition which represents Cokburne as summarily hanged over his own Tower gate. Research has shown that on May 16, 1530, a noted reiver, *William* Cokburne of Henderland,

was, in presence of King James V., at Edinburgh, convicted of high treason committed by him in seeking the aid of certain Englishmen for the plundering of a neighbour's property. His lands were forfeited and himself beheaded. It is conceivable enough for the ballad to be based on this incident, though just as likely it is associated with some other tragedy, possibly in the career of Perys and his spouse. The Dow Glen in the Henderland Burn, contains the Lady's Seat, where, according to Scott, who first published the ballad, " she is said to have striven to drown, amid the roar of a foaming cataract, the tumultuous noise which announced the close of her husband's existence."

" But think na ye my heart was sair,
When I laid the moul' on his yellow hair ?
O think na ye my heart was wae,
When I turn'd about, away to gae ?

" Nae living man I'll love again,
Since that my lovely knight is slain,
Wi' ae lock o' his yellow hair
I'll chain my heart for evermair."

Meggetland, to use Pitscottie's designation, has distinct charms of its own. Nature meets one here in some of her wildest moods. Anon she clothes herself as with all a child's winsomeness. In the seven rugged miles between Henderland and Talla Linns a hundred hidden nooks open up for artist and angler alike, and the lateral glens are full of rich surprises. To Cramalt came Mary and Darnley in 1566. Its tumble-down Peel and Queen's Chair, from which she witnessed the jousting and sports of the hunting parties, are close to the farmhouse. These were the days alluded to in the Introduction to Canto II. of " Marmion " :

" Of such proud huntings, many tales
Yet linger in our lonely dales,
Up pathless Ettrick and on Yarrow,
Where erst the outlaw drew his arrow."

But Time's rough marches have long since changed the face of royal Meggetdale, the place-names alone keeping the memory of its storied past.

" The scenes are desert now, and bare,
Where flourish'd once a forest fair,

TIBBIE SHIEL *P. 185*

TIBBIE SHIEL'S COTTAGE

When these waste glens with copse were lined,
And peopled with the hart and hind."

Such is the world of Romance that surrounds this kirk-nook of St. Mary's, "where the shepherds of Yarrow are sleeping" side by side with friars and freebooters, Convenanters and chiefs of ancient days, gallant knights, and luckless lovers.

Of its history comparatively little is known. From about 1275, the earliest mention of it, until at least 1640, it comes to us under different names as the Forest Kirk, where, as some think, Wallace was chosen Warden of Scotland; or St. Mary of Farmainishope, an old name for the adjoining lands of Kirkstead; or St. Mary of the Lowes; or the Kirk of Yarrow. In Canto II. of the "Lay" Scott describes its destruction in June, 1557, during a feud between the Buccleuch Scotts, headed by the Lady Buccleuch herself, and the clan Cranstoun. Though partially restored and used for some time afterwards, it never regained its old importance. A new church was built further down the valley, and the ruins of St. Mary's gradually sunk to the ground.

"For the Baron went on pilgrimage,
And took with him this elvish Page,
To Mary's Chapel of the Lowes;
For there, beside Our Ladye's Lake,
An offering he had sworn to make,
And he would pay his vows.
But the Ladye of Branksome gathered a band
Of the best that would ride at her command:
The trysting-place was Newark Lea.
Wat of Harden came thither amain,
And thither came John of Thirlestane,
And thither came William of Deloraine;
They were three hundred spears and three.
Through Douglas Burn, up Yarrow stream,
Their horses prance, their lances gleam.
They came to St. Mary's Lake ere day;
But the Chapel was void, and the Baron away.
They burned the Chapel for very rage,
And cursed Lord Cranstoun's Goblin-Page."

From its position it is not unlikely to have been a place of note in early Scottish story, and during the great ecclesiastical controversies it was identified most of all with the Romish side. A rich money-offering at the shrine of "Our Lady" was thought

to be good atonement for rapine and bloodshed. Nor was it free from the frequent bickerings of the Border. Many a skirmish has this quiet hillside witnessed in the restless days by-gone, many a heroic struggle, many a foul deed foully done. But all is silence now. It is long since the last Mass was sung here, long since the light went out above the altar. Knight and monk and prior rode from the place for the last time into the darkness of oblivion three hundred years ago.

Now—

" St. Mary's Loch lies shimmering still,
  But St. Mary's Kirk bell's lang dune ringing ;
There's naething now but the gravestane hill
  To tell o' a' their loud psalm-singing."

Poetry and tradition cling to this lone kirkyard as to no other. Here was the scene of the principal incident in the ballad of the " Gay Goss-Hawk," where a lover's touch wrought wonders :

" ' Set down, set down the bier,' he said,
  ' Let me her look upon ' ;
But as soon as Lord William touch'd her hand,
  Her colour began to come.

" She brighten'd like the lily flower,
  Till her pale colour was gone ;
With rosy cheek, and ruby lip,
  She smiled her love upon."

From this ballad Hogg took the idea of his exquisite poem of " Mary Scott," the concluding scene of which is at St. Mary's Kirk ; and the lovers of the " Douglas Tragedy " are at rest somewhere beneath these shapeless mounds.

" Lord William was buried in St. Mary's Kirk,
  Lady Marg'ret in Mary's quire ;
Out o' the lady's grave grew a bonny red rose,
  And out o' the knight's a brier.

" And they twa met, and they twa plat,
  And fain they wad be near ;
And a' the world might ken right weel
  They were twa lovers dear."

Yonder, " east from the kirk and holy ground," a small cairn—Binram's Corse—marks the grave of the unhappy priest—

like Ambrosio in "The Monk"—commemorated in Hogg's wild ballad of "Mess John"—

> "That Wizard Priest, whose bones are thrust
> From company of holy dust."

The few headstones proclaim the common names of the district—Anderson, Brydon, Grieve, Kerr, Laidlaw, Linton, Pringle, Scott. Here lies Thomas Linton of Chapelhope, Boston's pious elder, whose death in 1718 vexed him much. "He had been," says Boston, "a notable sufferer in the time of persecution, and spoiled of all his goods; but was become very wealthy; and moreover he had a heart given him to do good with his wealth, and was very useful in the country that way. On him I bestowed this epitaph, which I suppose is to be found on his tombstone in Mary churchyard in Yarrow:

> "All lost for Christ, an hundredfold
> Produc'd, and he became
> A father, eyes, and feet unto
> The poor, the blind, the lame."*

How many know that Hogg's early friend—his "more than brother," John Grieve, the inspirer of the "Queen's Wake," who sang as fourteenth Bard the ballad of "Mary Scott," and to whom "Mador of the Moor" was dedicated, sleeps on this deserted hill? The son of the Rev. Walter Grieve, of Cacrabank, in Ettrick, a Cameronian divine, and Jean Ballantyne from the Craig-of-Douglas, he was born at Dunfermline, September 12, 1781. Eminently successful as a hat-manufacturer, a spinal affection totally incapacitated him for business during the last eighteen years of his life. Newington Cottage, his city home, was a favoured literary resort of the Capital, and there he died April 4, 1836. "He was," says the inscription on his tomb, "universally esteemed and beloved, not more for the superiority of his understanding and his numerous attainments, than for the endearing cordiality of his manners, and the warm benevolence of his heart." Hogg had not a truer friend—"one whose affection neither misfortune nor imprudence could once shake." A poet,† and generous literary patron, Grieve's best claim to

* See "Memoirs of Thomas Boston," Period X. Morrison's edition, 1899.

† The songs marked C. in the "Forest Minstrel" are by Grieve. He wrote a version of "Polwarth-on-the-Green."

remembrance rests in his care for Hogg during those dark, poverty-stricken days of 1811, and the encouragement given to the despondent bard which bore such a bountiful harvest by the production of the Shepherd's masterpiece.

St. Mary's Loch is the largest sheet of water in the South of Scotland—in circumference seven and a half miles, in length three miles, and at its broadest part, between Cappercleuch and Bowerhope, one mile. There was no excursion in which Scott more delighted. "A complete day's idleness" meant often a drive to Yarrow and St. Mary's. In the marvellous reflections on its slumbering surface, rivalling almost the Norwegian Suldalsvand, he had full scope for that graphic and perfect word-picture in "Marmion":

> "Oft in my mind such thoughts awake,
> By lone Saint Mary's silent lake;
> Thou know'st it well—nor fen, nor sedge
> Pollute the pure lake's crystal edge;
> Abrupt and sheer, the mountains sink
> At once upon the level brink;
> And just a trace of silver sand
> Marks where the water meets the land.
> Far in the mirror, bright and blue,
> Each hill's huge outline you may view;
> Shaggy with heath, but lonely bare,
> Nor tree, nor bush, nor brake is there,
> Save where, of land, yon slender line
> Bears thwart the lake the scatter'd pine.
> Yet even this nakedness has power,
> And aids the feeling of the hour;
> Nor thicket, dell, nor copse you spy,
> Where living thing conceal'd might lie."

Across Megget Bridge at Meggetfoot, and on by the Lakeside, fir-fringed now, and opening up into new beauties, past the Rodono Hotel—Tibbie's rival—high-perched in its own birken shaw, and, facing familiar scenes, the white effigy of the Shepherd on its "bonnie green knowe," as North's prophetic vision beheld it, and we turn in on the left to the picturesque isthmus where nestles cosily what is perhaps the most celebrated hostelry in Scotland. The place has altered within recent years. The flow of tourist life was never greater, and, as a result, some of the old conditions are swept aside. Tibbie's is a kind of meeting-place

for the four dales of Yarrow, Ettrick, Tweed, and Moffat. Roads, with more or less of that "toilsome steepness" common to the Southern Highlands, wind from glen to glen, all finding their centre at this "wren's nest" as Hogg in the "Noctes" so happily styles it.

To one who can appreciate the spirit of the scene, an outing at St. Mary's is a remembrance not soon passed over. There is a setting other than the picturesque and the pleasurable which has its own appeal here as on all Yarrowside: "I see a sight ye cannot see, I hear a voice ye cannot hear."

A native of Ettrick, born in 1782, and at girl-service with the mother of the Ettrick Shepherd, Tibbie Shiel married, in 1813, Robert Richardson, a Westmorland mole-catcher employed at Thirlestane. Their first home was a small rustic shieling at the head of the Loch of the Lowes. In 1823 they removed to the cottage newly built at the head of St. Mary's Loch. The year following Richardson died, and Tibbie was left with six children. Her struggle must have been keen enough, though the Napier family were good friends during those clouded days. Robert Chambers was then collecting the Yarrow material for his "Picture of Scotland," and "put up" for a time at Tibbie's. He was her first guest. Delighted beyond measure with the enchanting scenery of the district, and the kindness and attention of his hostess, he proffered the advice that she should throw her house open for summer visitors, anglers, etc., promising to commend it. In the "Picture," which was published in 1827, he wrote as follows: "There has lately been erected at the head of the Loch a small, neat house, kept by a decent shepherd's widow, who lets her spare room for any length of time at a small rent, and who can provide her lodgers with as wholesome and agreeable country fare as may anywhere be found. It is hardly possible to conceive anything more truly delightful than a week's ruralizing in this comfortable little mansion, with the means of so much amusement at the very doors, and so many interesting objects of sight and sentiment lying closely around." Such was practically the origin of the world-famous Tibbie Shiel's. Since then how many thousands have crossed its humble threshold! After a widowhood of fifty-four years, Tibbie, who retained her maiden name to the last, died July 23, 1878, in her ninety-sixth year,

respected and lamented by all. Her funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Russell at old St. Mary's. And her grave is in green Ettrick beside the Shepherd's whose eyes she had closed more than forty years before. A glance at the Visitors' Book will give some idea of the number and character of Tibbie's patrons. Hogg and Wilson are of course pre-eminent. What scenes of revelry—nights and suppers of the gods—has this little parlour not witnessed! The older part of the house is practically unchanged. There are the identical box-beds, and many of Tibbie's *lares et penates* are still to the fore. One at least of the " Noctes " was laid here, in which the Shepherd, with rollicking Christopher and the cautious Tickler, discuss everything in general and Tibbie's in particular, comparing it to an " ant-hill," and a " beehive " respectively. There they criticised in a " jaunty, jocose, and pleasant post-prandial way, men, books, events, Nature, philosophy, poetry, sport, manners, customs, grave and gay, grotesque and grand, tragedy and comedy—the trivial and great, sense and nonsense, all going into the same simmering dish—a literary Scottish haggis, ' warm-reekin', rich.' "

Among other devotees at this shrine—an illustrious bede-roll —one thinks of Edward Irving walking from Kirkcaldy to Annan after the death of his first child in 1825; the student, Thomas Carlyle, tramping from Edinburgh to Ecclefechan; * courtly Edmondstoune Aytoun; Stoddart, " king of angling rhymers "; Glassford Bell, the poetic sheriff; ready-witted Russel of the *Scotsman*; Sir David Brewster; divines like Chalmers, Guthrie,

* " He described to me once with extraordinary vividness his first sight of the Vale of Yarrow as he struck it in one of his walks to Annandale. It was a beautiful day, and he had come upon a height looking down upon the stony stream and its classic valley. . . . The Yarrow songs were familiar to Carlyle; and among the many scraps of old verse which he was fond of quoting or humming to himself in his later years I observed this in particular:

" ' But Minstrel Burne cannot assauge
His grief while life endureth,
To see the changes of this age,
Which fleeting time procureth;

For mony a place stands in hard case
Where joy was wont beforrow,
With Homes that dwelt on Leader braes,
And Scotts that dwelt on Yarrow.' "

—Professor Masson.

Hanna, Cairns, Caird, and Dean Stanley; Professors Forbes, Ferrier, Lee, Flint, Knight, Lushington, the tuneful Shairp, the breezy Blackie, and "Berkeley" Fraser. Eliot Warburton dates his romance of "Darien" from Tibbie Shiel's. W. E. Gladstone was here in the early forties on his way to London during an election campaign, "Rab" Brown in 1850, Robert Louis Stevenson in 1867, and many another, "gentle or semple," from every county in Scotland, from many in England, and from all the British Dominions beyond the Seas.

St. Mary's and the Loch of the Lowes * seem to have originally formed one lake. "The difference of level," says Dr. Russell, "is only fifteen inches, and the narrow neck of land which now separates them has been raised by the opposite currents of the Crosscleuch and Oxcleuch burns." The smaller loch, bleaker and less picturesque than its neighbour, is barely a mile in length, and not more than a mile and a half in circumference. Some of the boldest, wildest scenery in the South of Scotland lies beyond, amongst the sources of the Yarrow and the mountainous Pass of Moffatdale. A country of the Covenant, rich in conventicle memories, is this rock-bound, solitary, silent, "inhospitable wilderness," as Hogg describes it. Its cleuchs and corries are haunted with tales of the "killing times." Driven from their homes, and "hunted like the osprey's brood" by such men as Claverhouse, Grierson of Lag, Colonel James Douglas of Skirling, and others, the hiding-places of those old heroes of the hill lie all around, and spots more sacred still are pointed out where not a few were shot down in cold blood, without trial, and frequently on the merest blush of suspicion. There has not been a blacker, uglier page in Scottish annals, or, to be paradoxical, one more luminous with the light that never was on sea or land. Hogg's "Brownie of Bodsbeck," one of the best of Covenanting stories, based partly on history and partly on tradition, is the classic of the district. Chapelhope, at the western end of the Loch of the Lowes, is the scene of its chief incidents. Long tenanted by Hogg's forbears, the Laidlaws, many an "outed" minister or hillman was fed and sheltered here in those pitiless days of the Persecution. At Riskinhope, almost opposite, Renwick, the

* The name is probably derived from the Anglo-Saxon *hlæwes* or *lows* —hills.

" fair-faced boy," the last Scottish martyr, preached in February, 1688, shortly before his death in the Edinburgh Grassmarket. " When he prayed that day," says the Ettrick Shepherd, " few of his hearers' cheeks were dry."

Professor Wilson's " Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life " embodies many traditions of the locality. In the whole range of Covenanting literature nothing equals for pathos his " Covenanter's Marriage Day," a Chapelhope episode, except, perhaps, the well-known story of Brown of Priesthill.

Four miles on, by the Little Yarrow, and " Muckra's barren brow," a cheerless stretch brings us to Birkhill, the dividing-line between Selkirkshire and Dumfriesshire. In the old days when never a soul dreamed of passing this ever-welcome hospice of the Moffat Alps, kindly " Jenny [Brown] of Birkhill," the shepherd's wife, was as well-known as Tibbie Shiel herself and a figure quite as interesting. Once (the story will bear re-telling), a tramp, taking advantage of the loneliness of the place, pushed his way into the kitchen and attempted to make free with some of the good-wife's gear. Jenny, however, was determined to see fair play, and screwing her courage to the sticking-point, seized hold of an axe that lay near, questioning the intruder : " Did onybody see ye come in ? " " No," faltered the cowardly fellow. " Then," said she, " de'il a ane'll see ye gang oot." The scoundrel soon made himself scarce enough—empty-handed. Scott records a visit to Birkhill in August, 1826, on one of his Drumlanrig trips : " We ascended the Birkhill path, under the moist and misty influence of the *genius loci*. Never mind ; my companions were merry and I cheerful. Our luncheon eaten in the herd's cottage ; but the poor woman saddened me unawares, by asking for poor Charlotte, whom she had often seen there with me. She put me in mind that I had come twice over those hills and bogs with a wheeled-carriage before the road, now an excellent one, was made. I knew it was true, but, on my soul, looking where we must have gone, I could hardly believe I had been such a fool."

At an earlier date Skene of Rubislaw describes Sir Walter's affection for the district : " I need not tell you that St. Mary's Loch and the Loch of the Lowes were amongst the most favourite scenes of our excursions, as his fondness for them continued to his

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LOCH SKENE

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GREY MARE'S TAIL

last days, and we have both visited them many times together." Of Dob's Linn,* close to Birkhill, savage and awesome, the Grey Mare's Tail, and " dark Loch Skene," he writes :

" One of our earliest expeditions was to visit the wild scenery of the mountainous tract above Moffat, including the cascade of the Grey Mare's Tail and the dark tarn called Loch Skene. In our ascent to the lake we got completely bewildered in the thick fog which generally envelops the rugged features of that lonely region ; and, as we were groping through the maze of bogs, the ground gave way, and down went horse and horsemen pell-mell into a slough of peaty mud and black water, out of which, entangled as we were with our plaids and floundering nags, it was no easy matter to get extricated. Indeed, unless we had prudently left our gallant steeds at a farmhouse below, and borrowed hill ponies for the occasion, the result might have been worse than laughable. As it was, we rose like the spirits of the bog, covered *cap-à-pie* with slime, to free themselves from which, our wily ponies took to rolling about on the heather, and we had nothing for it but following their example. At length, as we approached the gloomy loch, a huge eagle heaved himself from the margin and rose right over us, screaming his scorn of the intruders ; and altogether it would be impossible to picture anything more desolately savage than the scene which opened, as if raised by enchantment on purpose to gratify the poet's eye ; thick folds of fog rolling incessantly over the face of the inky waters, but rent asunder now in one direction, and then in another—so as to afford us a glimpse of some projecting rock or naked point of land, or island bearing a few scraggy stumps of pine—and then closing again in universal darkness upon the cheerless waste. Much of the scenery of ' Old Mortality ' was drawn from that day's ride."

Scott's party on the occasion was led by Hogg, who, recalling it afterwards, remarks : " I was disappointed in never seeing one incident in his subsequent works laid in a scene resembling the

* Dob's Linn recalls the old rhyme :

" For Hab Dob and Davie Din
Dang the deil owre Dob's Linn."

Here Halbert Dobson and David Dun, two worthies of the Covenant, had their refuge in a cottage on the brink of the precipice, nearly 400 feet high. Hogg narrates the tradition of their vanquishing the Devil, who plagued them nightly. With a Bible and a rowan-tree staff, they succeeded, after a desperate encounter, in tumbling him over the rocks, but in falling, the Arch-Tormentor transformed himself into a " bunch of barkit skins " and escaped unhurt. The hill beyond the Linn is known as the " Watch Knowe " or " Covenanters' Look-out." The Grey Mare's Tail has a fall of over 300 feet, and Loch Skene, two miles from Birkhill, is nearly a mile long, and between a quarter and half a mile in breadth. For an admirable sketch of the district see " Birkhill, a Reminiscence," by A Liverpool Merchant ; Lewis ; Selkirk, 1899.

rugged solitudes around Loch Skene, for I never saw him survey any with so much attention. A single serious look at a scene generally filled his mind with it, and he seldom took another ; but here he took in all the names of the hills, their altitudes, and relative situations with regard to one another, and made me repeat them several times." But in the Introduction to Canto II. of "Marmion," as well as in the "Old Mortality" settings, Scott turned the excursion to excellent account in one of his finest word-paintings :

"And my black Palmer's choice had been
Some ruder and more savage scene,
Like that which frowns round dark Loch Skene.
There eagles scream from isle to shore ;
Down all the rocks the torrents roar :
O'er the black waves incessant driven,
Dark mists infect the summer heaven ;
Through the rude barriers of the lake
Away its hurrying waters break,
Faster and whiter dash and curl,
Till down yon dark abyss they hurl.
Rises the fog-smoke white as snow,
Thunders the viewless stream below.
Diving as if condemn'd to lave
Some demon's subterranean cave,
Who, prison'd by enchanter's spell,
Shakes the dark rock with groan and yell.
. . . . .
Then issuing forth one foamy wave,
And wheeling round the Giant's Grave,
White as the snowy charger's tail,
Drives down the pass of Moffatdale."

Covenant memories, as has been said, haunt every glen and gully around Loch Skene and the Tail. The utter wildness and desolateness of the scene, the black, deep, treacherous morasses, gloomy, unexplored caverns, with the dense, impenetrable mists that so frequently and suddenly hang over and envelop it, combined to make it a coveted sheltering-place for many a poor oppressed moss-hagger. Since their days the region is probably unchanged—blighted as if in retribution for the sorrows they endured among its cheerless wastes, and rendered a vast abiding monument, silent, yet awful in expressiveness—God's visible memorial of their deathless devotion.

Our Yarrow pilgrimage is now ended—appropriately enough with Scott. His influence has been over us and around us all through. And here by this Border mountain-gate where the Mighty Minstrel has often stood, we catch up with a deeper and a more personal sympathy the feeling expressed in Wordsworth's apostrophe from " Yarrow Revisited "—

" For Thou, upon a hundred streams,
By tales of love and sorrow,
Of faithful love, undaunted truth,
Hast shed the power of Yarrow.
Flow on for ever, Yarrow Stream !
Fulfil thy pensive duty,
Well pleased that future Bards should chant
For simple hearts thy beauty ;
To dream-light dear while yet unseen,
Dear to the common sunshine ;
And dearer still, as now I feel,
To memory's shadowy moonshine ! "

From the Yarrow Uplands over into the Ettrick valley, if it be summer, and you weary for the hills, take the old bridle-track by Riskinhope Burn and Penistone Knowe to Scabcleuch, half a dozen miles of the Ettrick's wild moorland source. For motoring, however, or cycling, though the route be none of the best, there is the regular highway, a " lang dreich road," bare and mountainous. Past Tibbie's and Crosscleuch, how it twists and bends out and in and up and down between the dun hillsides ! The " pastoral melancholy " is supreme. A few sheep dotting the green knowes are almost the only signs of life. Still, as in most hill-country climbs, we are not unconscious of compensations here also. But having gained the summit, the tinkle of the Tushielaw Burn is in the ear, and descending its bosky glen, we are soon at the Ettrick turnpike, close to Tushielaw Inn, and about four miles from Ettrick Kirk. The Ettrick valley is larger and opens into a wider expanse than the Yarrow. Its scenery, especially in the upper reaches, is much more changeful and charming. If it cannot boast the romantic renown of the sister parish, associations no less interesting cluster around Ettrickside. While Yarrow has the chief scenes of Hogg's chequered career, it was Ettrick which gave him birth, and an imperishable name, and a grave. None loved Ettrick more than her Poet son. And

have not its pastoral solitudes been consecrated for all time by the story of that earlier Ettrick Shepherd, " the great, the grave, judicious " Boston ?

Nor is Ettrick lacking in legendary lore. The romance of ages lingers by its uplands. Still is it possible to roam

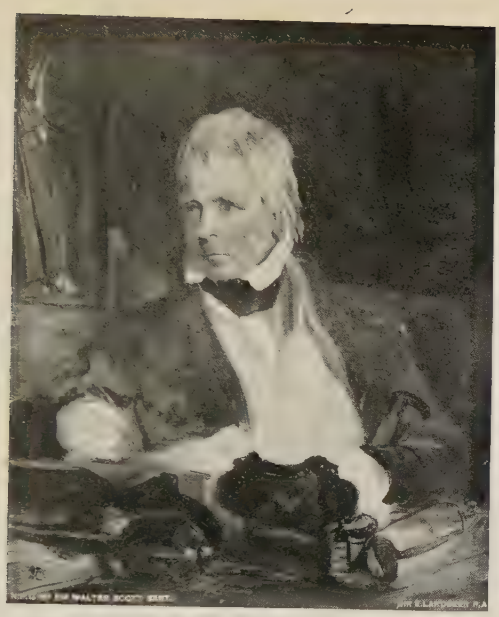
> " Far through the noonday solitude,
> By many a cairn and trenchèd mound,
> Where chiefs of yore sleep lone and sound,
> And springs, where grey-hair'd shepherds tell
> That still the fairies love to dwell."

Apart from Hogg, there is a native-born minstrelsy in praise of the Forest and the " Ettrick Banks," * dear to every lover of Border song.

The Ettrick rises among a few rushes far up among the mountains bordering on Dumfriesshire, in the bold, storm-swept Capel Fell, 2,223 feet above sea-level. Flowing in a north-easterly direction past the stately Ettrick Pen, commanding from its summit an extensive sweep of both Borders, as far south as Skiddaw, the infant stream winds its way for many miles, like a thread of silver, through a dense mass of high bleak hills, until in the neighbourhood of Ettrick Kirk it begins to open out into a pleasant vale with stretches of luxuriant haugh-land and slopes of greenest pasture.

Here are such place-names as Phawhope, redolent of the redoubtable " Will o' Phaup," Hogg's grandfather, the last man who saw and spoke to the fairies. He died when Hogg was only five, yet how well was the supernatural succession carried on by his daughter—the Shepherd's mother ! Through Margaret Laidlaw, most of all, Hogg heard the " horns of Elfland loudly blowing." But for her we might never have known the incomparable " Kilmeny " or the weird " Witch of Fife." Long ago, when the Border monks reared their great religious houses and evangelized in the far recesses of the hills, a little Chapel at Over-Kirkhope kept the true light burning in the Ettrick uplands. Shorthope and the sunny slopes of Lochy-Law are sacred to the Elfin race. Here Hogg laid the scene of " Old David," third in point of merit of his Fairyland ballads. And it should not

* See one of the oldest songs, " On Ettrick Banks ae simmer night," first published in Thomson's " Orpheus Caledonius," 1725.



THE " SHIRRA "

ETTRICK KIRK

be forgotten that at Goose-green Head the light first shone on Tibbie Shiel—

> " Kindly hostess of St. Mary,
> Blithe and bountiful, shrewd and good."

Ettrick Kirk and Manse, nestling at the foot of lofty green hills, where they begin to draw together with increasing height and grandeur towards the valley-head, belted by clumps of birch and oak, with the swish of the Kirk Burn close by, make up an exceedingly pretty picture. Erected in 1822, and since restored, the Kirk is probably the fourth building on the same site. A succession of twenty-three ministers have served the cure since 1618, and it is curious to note that no fewer than six of these held office within ten years—1781 to 1791. The most notable name in Ettrick ecclesiastical annals, wedded, like Hogg's, to the arena of his trials and triumphs, is that of Thomas Boston, " whose peaceful walk with God is not yet forgotten in Ettrick Forest, and whose writings, originally designed for his own shepherds, are now praised in all the churches, and most prized by those Christians who have farthest grown in grace." Born at Duns, March 17, 1676, a Covenanter's child, and early evincing a desire for the Christian ministry, Boston studied at Edinburgh, was licensed to preach in 1697, and ordained to Simprin in the Merse, September 21, 1699. On May 1, 1707—the day of the Union of England and Scotland—he was translated to Ettrick, where he laboured till his death, May 20, 1732. Boston's Ettrick ministry opened amid clouds and tempest. It closed with a burst of song and in a golden sunset. A bitter estrangement between him and his people, for which he was in no way responsible, grieved him sorely. By and by, as the stubborn Ettrickers began to recognize his worth, the breach was healed, and the pastor grew in favour both in and out of his parish. At his first Communion in 1710, fifty-seven only were present. Twenty-one years afterwards, in celebrating the ordinance for the last time, 777 surrounded the sacred table. The Ettrick Sacrament was an event of the year in the Border country. From every dale in the four counties, and from far beyond, crowds poured into this remote upland parish. Latterly, Boston discoursed sitting in the pulpit, too weak to bear the strain of standing, and when unable even to

walk to church, the congregation assembled outside the Manse, and the sermon was preached from one of the windows. The "Fourfold State" was given to the world in 1720. The "Crook in the Lot," and numerous Sermons, appeared after his death. The "Memoirs," published in 1776, is a deeply interesting and illuminating volume. As one of the twelve "Marrow" Men,* devoted to the doctrine of "the open door" set forth in Fisher's "Marrow of Modern Divinity," Boston occupied a leading place in the evangelical movement of his time. The Assemblies of 1720–22 condemned the Marrow, and the ministers of the Church were strictly enjoined to warn their people against it. But the agitation fell flat and came to nothing. The Marrow triumphed, and is to-day the heritage of the whole Church of Christ. Boston was a man of warmest piety, a scholar—strong in the Hebrew points, a vigorous, terse writer, a literary stylist whose works were long among the most widely-read religious books of the Scottish people. Robert Chambers tells that in his young days at Peebles a common child's question was, "Who was the best man that ever lived?" to which the answer was, "Thomas Boston." And enthusiastic admirers were found who could say, "Give me the Bible and Boston, and you can take away every other book." Over his tomb in the kirkyard of Ettrick a pillared monument, erected in 1806, bears the following inscription: †

"As a testimony of esteem for the Reverend Thomas Boston, senior, whose private character was highly respectable; whose public labours were blessed to many; and whose valuable writings have contributed much to promote the advancement of vital Christianity, this monument (by the permission of relatives) is erected by a religious and grateful public."

* Among the twelve were the following Border divines: Thomas Boston, Ettrick; Gabriel Wilson, Maxton (Boston's dearest friend), Henry Davidson, Galashiels; and William Hunter, Lilliesleaf. The Erskines were also of the number.

† Some relics of Boston's Ettrick ministry are preserved in the Manse in a large box made, as the inscription says, "from the wood of the old ash-tree at Tushielaw Tower, reputed by popular tradition to have been the dule tree of that place." They consist of tokens in use in Boston's time; the Session Records, written and signed by him in a clear business hand; the Dead Bell referred to in the "Memoirs," with date 1715; a handle of his coffin, two very old and quaint ladles, and several sacramental vessels. Other relics are in the possession of descendants. His walking-stick is in Hawick Museum.

Boston was succeeded at Ettrick by his son, Thomas Boston the younger. Translated to Oxnam in 1748, he became minister of the Relief Congregation at Jedburgh, of which body, along with Gillespie of Carnock and others, he was a Founder and first Moderator of Presbytery.

Not far from Boston's grave a simple stone (see p. 160) tells that

Here lie the mortal remains of
JAMES HOGG,
The Ettrick Shepherd,
Who was born at Ettrick Hall in the year 1770,
And died at Altrive Lake the 21st day of November, 1835.
This stone is erected as a tribute of affection by his widow, Margaret Hogg.

On one side is the burial-place of Hogg's grandfather and parents :

Here lyeth
WILLIAM LAIDLAW,
The far-famed Will o' Phaup,
Who for feats of Frolic, Agility, and Strength
Had no Equal in his day ;
He was born at Craik A.D. 1691,
And died in the 84th year of his age.
Also MARGARET, his eldest daughter,
Spouse to Robert Hogg, and mother of
The Ettrick Shepherd,
Born at Old Over Phaup in 1730,
And died in the 83rd year of her age.
Also ROBERT HOGG, her husband,
Late Tenant of Ettrick Hall,
Born at Bowhill in 1729,
And died in the 93rd year of his age
And three of their Sons.

On the other side rest Mrs. Hogg's father and mother. A few yards further over Tibbie Shiel sleeps her last sleep.

Ettrickhall and the monument to Hogg, erected on his birth-spot, are within a few paces of the Church.

" There first I saw the rising morn,
There first my infant mind unfurled
To ween that spot where I was born
The very centre of the world."

In the humble cottage, long removed, Scott and the Shepherd met for the first time in the summer of 1802. Whilst at work one day in a field on his father's farm, word was brought that

some gentlemen desired his immediate presence at Ramseycleuch. One of these was supposed to be the " Shirra " himself. The news pleased Hogg beyond measure. To forgather with the editor of the " Minstrelsy," the first two volumes of which he had seen, and had given material help for the third one forthcoming, was no ordinary event to the youthful enthusiast. " I accordingly flung down my hoe," he writes, " and hasted away home to put on my Sunday clothes ; but before reaching it, I met the ' Shirra ' and Mr. William Laidlaw coming to visit me. They alighted, and remained in our cottage a considerable time, perhaps nearly two hours, and we were friends on the very first exchange of sentiments. It could not be otherwise, for Scott had no duplicity about him ; he always said as he thought. My mother chanted the ballad of ' Auld Maitland ' to him, with which he was highly delighted." Scott was in his element, promising another visit. The Covenanter stones in the churchyard were examined, and in the evening, at Ramseycleuch, Hogg dined with the " Shirra." Next day the party explored the lonely Rankleburn, with the sites of Buccleuch Kirk far up among the hills,* the Tower, the first real patrimony of the famous ducal house, and the deep ravine, where, as the legends tell,

> " Old Buccleuch the name did gain
> When in the cleuch the buck was ta'en.†

Years afterwards, when Scott received his Baronetcy, Hogg recalled this first meeting, with its amusing antiquarian quests, in one of his most felicitous tributes :

> " Ah ! could I dream when first we met,
> When by the scanty ingle set,
> Beyond the moors where curlews wheel,
> In Ettrick's bleakest, loneliest shiel,
> Conning old songs of other times,
> Most uncouth chants and crabbed rhymes—

* Rankleburn, or Buccleuch, once a separate parish, was united to Ettrick in 1650.

† The tradition is that Kenneth McAlpine, hunting in the royal Forest, started a buck at Ettrick-heuch and pursued it to the place now called Buccleuch, about two miles from the junction of Rankleburn with the Ettrick. There the animal stood at bay, until John of Galloway, coming up, seized it by the horns, bearing it in triumph to the King. He thereupon received the surname of Scott of Buck-cleuch, and had conferred upon him the rangership of the Forest.

Could I e'er dream that wayward wight,
Of roguish joke and heart so light,
In whose oft-changing eye I gazed,
Not without dread the head was crazed,
Should e'er, by genius' force alone,
Skim o'er an ocean sailed by none ;
All the hid shoals of envy miss,
And gain such noble port as this !

* * * * *

Yes, twenty years have come and fled
Since we two met ; and Time has shed
His riming honours o'er each brow—
My state the same, how changed art thou !
But every year yet over-past
I've loved thee dearer than the last.
For all the volumes thou hast wrote,
Those that are owned, and that are not,
Let these be conned even to a grain,
I've said it, and will say't again—
Who knows thee but by these alone,
The better half is still unknown."

Scott's excursions to Ettrick were not infrequent. Familiar with every landmark, its keeps and peels were of special interest. There is Thirlestane, the beauty-spot of the vale, clad in such wealth of woodland as Scott never saw. Hard by the modern mansion * is all that remains of the ancient stronghold, burned by Hertford in 1544. The old family, " long-descended " from the Scotts, the original owners, and from John Napier of Merchiston, of logarithms celebrity, is still in possession. John Scott of Thirlestane, the only baron faithful to James V. at Fala in 1542 when the other nobles declined to acquiesce in his invasion of England, is introduced in Canto IV. of the " Lay " :

" From fair St. Mary's silver wave,
From dreary Gamescleuch's dusky height,
His ready lances Thirlestane brave
Arrayed beneath a banner bright.

* Among the treasures of Thirlestane are a portion of the clothes worn by Montrose at his execution : the linen napkin in which his heart was wrapped ; a rich satin cap of a faded straw colour, bordered with lace ; and a pair of knitted thread hose. The Napiers were active supporters of the Royalist cause, and were related to the Great Marquis. Many of the family have been distinguished as soldiers, diplomatists, lawyers, and men of letters.

The tressured fleur-de-luce he claims
To wreathe his shield, since royal James,
Encamped by Fala's mossy wave,
The proud distinction grateful gave,
For faith 'mid feudal jars;
What time, save Thirlestane alone,
Of Scotland's stubborn barons none
Would march to southern wars;
And hence, in fair remembrance worn,
Yon sheaf of spears his crest has borne;
Hence his high motto shines revealed—
'Ready, aye ready,' for the field."

Here Hogg placed his weird ballad "The Pedlar." Gamescleuch Tower, on the right bank of the stream, facing Thirlestane, is embalmed in the "Mountain Bard"; and of Tushielaw, two miles on, perched like a gled's nest against the craig above, how much might be said! A vault-like fragment alone survives of this almost impregnable strength. No name struck terror to the heart of the Borderside like that of Adam Scott, the "King of Thieves," and the popular fiction, which makes him share the fate of his own gallows-tree,* would have been, in his case, but scantly poetic justice. He perished, however, at Edinburgh, May 18, 1530, within two days of Cokburne of Henderland, and their heads were spiked together on the Tolbooth. Hogg's "Mary Scott," sung by Grieve in the "Wake," has its scene at Tushielaw, as also Charles Gibbon's rousing romance, the "Braes of Yarrow." Further on, Gilmanscleuch reminds us of Hogg's ballad, so much admired by Scott and Southey,† in which the Shepherd recounts how the place fell to Wat of Harden in reparation for a slain son. The description of the old reiver locking his sons "in prison strang" and hurrying off to Holyrood to seek an interview with the King and obtain a grant of the lands of Gilmanscleuch is full of dramatic touches:

"An' he's awa' to Holyrood,
Amang our nobles a',
With bonnet lyke a girdel braid,
An' hayre like Craighope snaw.

* Accidentally burned a few years ago. Nothing but a charred stump remains.

† "I have ever expected great things from you, since in 1805 I heard Walter Scott by his own fireside at Ashestiel repeat 'Gilmanscleuch.'"—Southey to Hogg, December, 1814.

" His coat was of the forest grene,
Wi' buttons lyke the moon ;
His breiks were o' the guid buckskyne,
With a' the hayre aboon ;

" His twa-hand sword hung round his neck,
An' rattled at his heel ;
The rowels of his silver spurs
Were of the Ripon steel ;

" His hose were braced wi' chains o' airn,
An' round wi' tassels hung ;
At ilka tramp o' Harden's heel
The royal arches rung."

At Gilmanscleuch lived " daft Jock Gray," the prototype of " Davie Gellatley " in " Waverley." Yonder are the Deloraines,* recalling the stout, heroic rider, William of Deloraine, with whose unearthly history every reader of the " Lay " is at once enthralled :

" A stark moss-trooping Scott was he
As e'er couched Border lance by knee."

Henry Scott Riddell, it is interesting to note, shepherded for two years at Wester Deloraine, and Hogg's tender lyric, the " Bonnie Lass of Deloraine," was long a favourite in the Forest. At Singlie, a short distance down, Hogg served for a season. Near the head of the Dod Burn, up from Hyndhope, Scott was wont to locate that splendid specimen of the Border " riding " ballads, " Jamie Telfer." The " fair Dodhead," however, is rather that near Penchrise, not far from Skelfhill, on the southern side of Teviot, within three miles of Stobs, where Telfer vainly seeks help from Elliot. Professor Veitch argues for the Ettrick Dodhead, but the balance of evidence is in favour of the Teviotdale site.

Soon we pass Ettrick Shaws ; Kirkhope glen, with its well-preserved Peel ; the picturesque Linns and " Loup " of Newhouse, a favourite Scott pilgrimage, visited by him in 1831

* The name seems to be derived from the Gaelic *dal-Orain*—" Orain's Land." " Orain " is the name of a Celtic saint, and the local pronunciation is always Delòraine, never, as Scott rhymed it, with the accent on the last syllable—

" I'd give the lands of Deloraine,
Dark Musgrave were alive again."

Others find an origin in the fact that James II. gave his Queen the Forest of Ettrick as part of her dowry ; hence the name, *de la reine*.

before setting out for Italy ; the pretty little village of Ettrickbridgend, with Kirkhope Parish Church, built in 1839 ; the clean, trig feus of Brockhill ; Fauldshope, farmed for ages by the " hardy Hoggs," progenitors of the Ettrick Shepherd ; and then Oakwood is reached, the best-conditioned of the Selkirkshire towers. A constant but erroneous tradition, arising, no doubt, from the fact that another of the same name possessed the place, associates Oakwood with the Wizard Michael Scot. Sir Walter seems to have been the first, in the " Lay," to give publicity to this legend. But the story is impossible. Michael Scot flourished during the thirteenth century, while Oakwood was not built until the beginning of the seventeenth, the date of its erection by Robert Scott in 1602 being inserted above a window in the east wall. Oakwood is still owned by the descendant of the noted Wat of Harden, who afterwards held the barony.

Below Oakwood a short distance we come to Bowhill, at the base of Black Andro, the Forest home of Buccleuch, a princely dwelling in the Italian style, girt by gorgeous plantations, its grounds of the most picturesque description—the whole estate so arranged as to render it, perhaps, the ideal baronial residence in the South of Scotland. Scott's lines in the " Lay " are well known.

> " So pass'd the winter's day ; but still
> When summer smiled on sweet Bowhill,
> And July's eve, with balmy breath,
> Waved the bluebells on Newark heath ;
> When throstles sung in Harehead-shaw,
> And corn was green on Carterhaugh,
> And flourish'd, broad, Blackandro's oak,
> The aged Harper's soul awoke ! "

Carterhaugh, close by, on a tongue of land at the junction of the Yarrow and Ettrick, is scene of the fairy ballad " The Young Tamlane." Scott prefaced his " Minstrelsy " version by an elaborate Introduction full of the lore of Fairyland. The tale is as old as the middle of the sixteenth century, and is mentioned in the " Complaynt of Scotland " in 1549. Several versions are met with. Burns, in 1792, contributed to Johnson's " Museum " a copy in some respects finer than Scott's. The argument of the ballad is as follows : Dunbar, Earl of March, the owner of Oakwood, gives Carterhaugh to his daughter Janet as part of

her dowry. Faithfully warned of the dangers to maidens passing through the domain, she visits the place, meets with Tamlane, and, by fairy glamourie, falls a conquest to his wiles. In the sequel, he reveals that he is the son of Randolph, Earl of Moray. While on a visit to his uncle, her father, he was overcome with the fatigues of the chase, and falling asleep, was discovered by the Queen of the Fairies, and transformed into one of themselves. Tamlane's Well, where Janet met her lover and drew from him the secret of deliverance from the elfin charms, is still to be seen. So great was her devotion that, notwithstanding the weirdest transmutations as she held him fast, his release was finally effected :

" Gloomy, gloomy was the night,
And eiry was the way,
As fair Janet in her green mantle
To Miles Cross* she did gae.

" The heavens were black, the night was dark,
And dreary was the place ;
But Janet stood, with eager wish,
Her lover to embrace.

" About the dead hour o' the night
She heard the bridles ring ;
And Janet was as glad o' that
As any earthly thing.

" And first gaed by the black, black steed,
And then gaed by the brown ;
But fast she gript the milk-white steed,
And pu'd the rider down.

" She pu'd him frae the milk-white steed,
And loot the bridle fa' ;
And up there raise an elritch cry—
' He's won among us a' ! '

* * * * *

" Up then spake the Queen o' Fairies,
Out o' a bush o' rye—
' She's ta'en awa' the bonniest knight
In a' my companie.' "

Scott's song entitled " On the Lifting of the Banner of the House of Buccleuch," written in 1815 and published in 1826,

* Probably a corruption of Mary's Cross.

with music, in George Thomson's collection, has its scene at Carterhaugh. The chorus is patriotic enough :

" Then up with the Banner, let Forest winds fan her,
She has blazed over Ettrick eight ages and more ;
In sport we'll attend her, in battle defend her,
With heart and with hand, like our fathers before."

Hogg has some stanzas celebrating the same occasion—a great football match between the men of Selkirk and Yarrow, at which nearly all the neighbouring nobility and gentry were present, with the " Shirra," the Shepherd, and " Master Walter Scott, younger, of Abbotsford, who attended suitably mounted and armed," bearing the ancient Banner of the Buccleuch family, unfurled for the first time since the funeral pageant of Earl Walter in 1633. Lockhart describes the scene in vol. v. of the " Life." Mary Lee of Carelha', an old name for Carterhaugh, was the heroine of Hogg's " Pilgrims of the Sun ".

A mile or two further, past the picturesque grounds of The Haining, and the Forest Capital is again reached. Fitly may we recall J. B. Selkirk's lines :

" Four hundred years ago, this lovely morn,
Fair Ettrick Forest, in her sylvan prime,
Lay basking in the sunny summer clime.
Here where I stand, among the ripen'd corn,
One might have heard the royal bugle horn,
Or some bluff hunter-poet of the time
Chanting aloud his latest ballad rhyme
Of hero done to death, or maid forlorn.

" The Forest's gone ! the world's improved since then !
A forest now of chimneys, Babel-high,
Belch out their blackened breath against the sky.
Take off your hats to Progress, gentlemen !
So runs the world ; but as for me—heigh-ho !
I should have lived four hundred years ago."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE EAST BORDER—"MARMION" AND FLODDEN

OF Scott's verse-romances, "Marmion: a Tale of Flodden Field" holds the second place for popularity. Begun in November, 1806, and published February 23, 1808, the poem proved at once an immense success. Before a line of it had been penned Constable paid a thousand guineas for the copyright, and during the author's life at least 50,000 copies were sold. Much of it was written on the Shirra's Knowe, and thought out in the saddle whilst galloping among the green braes of Ashestiel; and many of the more energetic passages, particularly the description of Flodden Field, were composed amid the clatter of arms, in cavalry quarters at Portobello. The poem opens about the beginning of August, and concludes with the defeat of Flodden, September 9, 1513. During his youth at Kelso, Scott had made himself familiar with the Flodden district and with every detail of the battle. Long had he brooded over its fateful memory, and the result was this most stirring and vivacious of his poetical productions. As indelibly as on the soberer page of the historian "Marmion" describes that dark, grief-bound day

> "Of the stern strife and carnage drear
> Of Flodden's fatal field,
> Where shiver'd was fair Scotland's spear,
> And broken was her shield."

A day at Flodden—the Homeric passages of "Marmion" perused on the field itself—forms a Scott-Country excursion unusually rich in charm of story and scenery. Perhaps the most convenient starting-point is from Coldstream, pleasantly situated on the left bank of the broad, bending Tweed, spanned by Smeaton's noble five-arched bridge, erected in 1763–66. Here some fine riverside effects quicken our sense of the picturesque, and the district is laden with memories the most romantic. From its proximity to the Border, Coldstream early played a

prominent part in Scottish history. It was the nearest Scottish town to Norham Castle, the great frowning fortress of the East Border, and the ford at Coldstream, the first above Berwick of any consequence, was the chief crossing-place between the two countries. Toward the close of David I.'s reign, or early in that of Malcolm the Maiden, about 1165, Gospatric of Dunbar and his pious Countess, Derder, founded the wealthy Cistercian Priory of Coldstream, inhabited by a colony of nuns from Witehou,* and for at least four centuries the convent was a flourishing religious centre. Throughout a wide circle, embracing almost the whole of Berwickshire and far into Northumberland, the evangel of the Cross was carried forward conquering and to conquer. Churches and conventual establishments arose here and there, and continued for long their Christianizing and civilizing work. Lennel, in the immediate neighbourhood—the ancient name of the parish until 1716—was probably the first of these. Here Marmion rested on the eve of the Battle of Flodden, and around its " one frail arch " the dead are still laid to rest—a hallowed, sweet nook by the smiling banks of Tweed. At the Hirsel, at Birgham, Eccles, Hutton, Swinton, and other neighbouring places, the nuns held grants of land and dependent chapels. The Hirsel, about a mile to the north-west of Coldstream, is the beautiful seat of the Earl of Home. Its church or chapel disappeared prior to 1627, and no trace of it can be found. Birgham, on the highway between Kelso and Coldstream, three and a half miles from the latter town, is a place of considerable antiquity. Here, in 1188, William the Lion and his nobles met in conference with the Bishop of Durham and the envoys of Henry II. of England, to resist the attempted supremacy of the English Church over the Scottish. In 1289 a Convention of the Scottish Estates met at Birgham to consider the proposed marriage of the Maid of Norway with Prince Edward of England, and in July, 1290, was signed the " Treaty of Birgham," securing the practical independence of Scotland. At Eccles, a very ancient Merse village, the remains of St. Mary's

* The name has been associated with Withow and Whiston in England, but the likelihood is that this was the original description of the locality where the Priory stood. In the Confirmatory Charter the gift is assigned to the " holy sisters of Witehou, serving God in that place."

Nunnery, burned by Hertford in 1545, are still to be seen. Henry Home, Lord Kames, distinguished judge and philosopher, was a native of this parish. Hutton is supposed to have been the camping-ground of the army of Edward I. in 1296, on the day before the capture of Berwick. Philip Ridpath, editor of the " Border History of England and Scotland," written by his brother George, minister of Stichill,* was minister of Hutton from 1759 to 1788. Swinton is identified with the ancient and honourable family of that name, who are said to have acquired the lands held by them for upwards of 750 years as a reward for clearing the country of wild boars or swine. Sir Alan Swinton, who died about the year 1200, is assumed by Sir Walter Scott as the hero of Halidon Hill.† Sir Walter's maternal grandmother was Jean, elder daughter of Sir John Swinton, and first wife of Professor John Rutherford. Simprin, united to Swinton in 1761, was the scene of Thomas Boston's ministry from 1699 till his translation to Ettrick in 1707. The Priory of Coldstream has long since disappeared. It stood a little to the east of the present market-place, near the ford at the junction of the Leet and Tweed. The street or lane leading to its site is still called the Abbey Lane. Like other religious houses of the Border, it suffered much during the international struggle, and was finally demolished in Hertford's fiery onslaught of 1545. A stone coffin and a quantity of human bones, believed to be those of the dead from Flodden, were dug up in 1834 from its long-disused burial-ground, and its ancient Pomarium is represented by a large and beautiful orchard to the south-east of the town.

But Coldstream has other memories. There is the ford, just mentioned, by which Edward I. entered Scotland in 1296, and used by army after army, both English and Scottish, for purposes of invasion, down to 1640, when Montrose led the Covenanters southwards. Sir Walter thus describes the passing of Lord Marmion and his followers :

> " Then on that dangerous ford, and deep,
> Where to the Tweed Leet's eddies creep,
> He ventured desperately ;

* This " History " was published posthumously in 1776, and has since been re-issued. George Ridpath was born in Ladykirk Manse in 1717. See his Diary in Scottish History Society Series (Edinburgh, 1922).

† See his drama of " Halidon Hill."

And not a moment will he bide
Till squire, or groom, before him ride ;
Headmost of all he stems the tide,
And stems it gallantly.
Eustace held Clare upon her horse,
Old Hubert held her rein,
Stoutly they braved the current's course,
And, though far downward driven perforce,
The southern bank they gain ;
Behind them, straggling, came to shore,
As best they might, the train :
Each o'er his head his yew-bow bore,
A caution not in vain ;
Deep need that day that every string,
By wet unharm'd, should sharply ring.
A moment then Lord Marmion stayed,
And breathed his steed, his men array'd,
Then forward moved his band,
Until, Lord Surrey's rear-guard won,
He halted by a cross of stone,
That, on a hillock standing lone,
Did all the field command."

And we can scarcely forget the romance that clings to the Bridge of Coldstream. As the Gretna Green of the East Border, the place is notorious in matrimonial annals. The old toll-house, once an inn, now a lodge for Lennel, on the Scottish side, is still to the fore, where thousands of runaway couples and others pledged eternal troth in the barest, briefest ceremony, generally only in the presence of the blacksmith " priest," or miller, tailor, shoemaker, as he chanced to be. Nothing was then more frequent than the evasion of the marriage laws, and until Parliament passed the prohibitory statute of 1856 Coldstream was one of the most popular, as it was one of the easiest, shrines for infatuated votaries of Hymen. Lord Brougham is stated to have been married here in 1819, but the ceremony—in clandestine fashion certainly—was celebrated, not at the Bridge, but at an inn of the town. Other Lords of the Woolsack seem to have followed his example, though not at Coldstream, as is commonly supposed. Lord Eldon was wedded at Blackshiel, and Lord Erskine at Gretna Green.

It was just about here—at the English side of the Bridge, that Robert Burns on May 7, 1787, finding himself for the first

time on southern soil, threw off his hat, and, kneeling down, repeated with much emotion the sublimely poetic prayer with which he closes the "Cotter's Saturday Night." His Coldstream visit he thus diarized: "Coldstream—went over to England—Cornhill—glorious river Tweed—clear and majestic—fine bridge. Dine at Coldstream with Mr. Ainslie and Mr. Foreman—beat Mr. F. in a dispute about Voltaire. Tea at Lennel House with Mr. Brydone—my reception extremely flattering—sleep at Coldstream." This was Patrick Brydone, son of the minister of Coldingham, and born there in 1741. His "Tour through Sicily and Malta" was a well-known book in its day. Lennel House was his residence, where he died in 1818. His grave is in Lennel churchyard. His wife was the eldest daughter of Principal Robertson, the historian, and his own eldest daughter became Countess of Minto. He is introduced into the lines of "Marmion," descriptive of the hero's halt at Lennel's convent:

> "Stung with these thoughts, he urged to speed
> His troop, and reach'd, at eve, the Tweed,
> Where Lennel's convent closed their march:
> There now is left but one frail arch,
> Yet mourn thou not its cells;
> Our time a fair exchange has made;
> Hard by, in hospitable shade,
> A reverend pilgrim dwells,
> Well worth the whole Bernardine brood,
> That e'er wore sandal, frock, or hood."

At Coldstream, General Monk raised the famous regiment of Foot Guards—the Coldstreams—with which he obtained so many triumphs and the restoration of Charles II. to the throne. The house where Monk spent the winter of 1659—or, more correctly, its successor on the same site—stands to the east of the market-place, showing the inscription, "Headquarters of the Coldstream Guards, 1659; rebuilt 1865." The oldest but one of our British regiments, few have surpassed it in heroic history. In deeds that won the Empire the Coldstreams have been always at the front. None have more worthily or more willingly accepted a full share in maintaining the honour and integrity of the nation.

With a glance at the Marjoribanks monuments—to Sir John of Lees, a local benefactor, and Charles, a popular M.P. of the

Reform period—we cross the Bridge, and are immediately on the English Border. A mile or so brings us to Cornhill and Coldstream station. At once we know we are in England. There is the unmistakable " burr " common to every native of Cornhill. No Coldstream native has it, and, more singular, no native of Wark, on the Northumbrian side also, some two miles up the river. Henry Erskine, father of the Erskines, ejected by the Nonconformity Act of 1662, was the last Presbyterian incumbent of Cornhill. Moneylaws, where he afterwards ministered from 1685 to 1687, and where Ralph was born, whose " silver tongue did living truth impart," lies a short distance off. William Howitt describes Wark as the " most peaceful of agricultural hamlets." Of its once proud Castle, close to the Tweed, crowning the Kaim of Wark—a relic of the Drift Period—not a trace remains. A solitary flagstaff marks its site, and the inscription on a strong spring hard by reminds us that here, about 1344, according to the oft-told tradition, King Edward III. instituted the Most Noble Order of the Garter. Joan, Countess of Salisbury, wife of the castellan, dropped her garter while dancing with the King, who, picking it up, fastened it round his leg ; but, perceiving his Queen's jealous glances, returned it to its embarrassed owner with the remark, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*— " Dishonoured be he who thinks ill of it." The Castle, lying directly on the Border line, played a not inconspicuous part in the old, wild days of international jealousy and struggle. Around it mighty armies have mustered. Brave warriors have scaled its battlements. Many a rough cannonade has it borne from Scots and English alike. And what stirring pageants and deeds of chivalry have been witnessed within its embrasured walls ! Here Bishop Percy represents his hero Bertram to have been conveyed after the disastrous proof of his lady's " helm " :

" All pale, extended on their shields,
And weltering in his gore,
Lord Percy's knights their bleeding friend
To Wark's fair Castle bore."

But the " unutterable silence of forsakenness " has long claimed the spot :

" The nettles rank
Are seeding on thy wild-flower bank ;

G. W. Gibson

COLDSTREAM

The hemlock and the dock declare
In rankness dark their mastery there;
And all around thee speaks the sway
Of desolation and decay."

The little cluster of thatched cottages that cling to the base of the green mound, crumbling and fast-fading, too, as the years go by, accords well with the spirit of the scene. Nature alone is the unalterable element—Tweed and the distant hills abiding the same through all the centuries:

"Thou wert the work of man, and so hast pass'd
Like those who piled thee; but the features still
Of steadfast Nature all unchanged remain;
Still Cheviot listens to the northern blast,
And the blue Tweed winds murmuring round thy hill;
While Carham whispers of the slaughter'd Dane."*

The chief attraction of the district is the Field of Flodden, five miles along the Wooler Road from Coldstream station. The way lies through a well-wooded and cultivated countryside, rising gradually from the banks of the Tweed. Crossing the Pallinsburn,† near the mansion of that name, that ran, as is said of many another burn, three days red after the battle, we come within sight of Flodden Hill, no longer a bare bald height as in time by-past, but flanked and crowned with wealth of graceful greenwood.

Every student of Scottish history and of Sir Walter is familiar with the circumstances of the fight. Begun in a spirit of bravado and knight-errantry, and culminating in utter rout to the Scots, the story of Flodden has been graven deep on the heart of the nation—deeper, perhaps, than any other of her battles, not even excepting Bannockburn. No vexed questions were involved in it, and the political results were insignificant. Yet by its very failure, and the profound melancholy of its setting, it touched and fired the imagination to a degree unknown in mightier issues. Bannockburn struck the keynote of freedom, but the pæans in

* See Delta's "Sonnet on Wark Castle." At Carham Church, in which parish Wark is situated, Moir was married in June, 1829. Carham was the scene of a decisive defeat of the Danes by the Northumbrian Saxons.

† Said to be derived from Paulinus, a Northumbrian preacher, who baptized here large numbers of converts.

its praise are comparatively meagre. More song and ballad lore has gathered about Flodden than any battle since the days of Homer. It is probable that in this verse-chronicle of the people more than through any dull historical data its memory has taken a larger and firmer hold of the Scottish sentiment. So long as the " Flowers of the Forest " continues to charm with its plaintive melody, or Aytoun's and J. B. Selkirk's ballads remain to be read, the remembrance of Flodden will be uppermost in the martial annals of Scotland. And so long, as " Marmion " stirs the soul with its flashing description of this deadliest of all disasters, with its sustained and lofty movements, and the pathetic pictures that appear toward the close of the poem, Flodden will abide a great rallying landmark for centuries unborn.

It is unnecessary to detail the causes which led to the invasion of England on the part of James IV. against his brother-in-law, Henry VIII., then at war with France, Scotland's ancient ally. The attempt was pre-eminently foolish and reckless, and its penalty dear enough in all conscience. But it taught both kingdoms a wholesome and much-needed lesson. When the King had issued his summons to all who were of fighting age, a wave of extraordinary enthusiasm spread over the country. Within three weeks he found himself at the head of 100,000 men, met on the Borough Muir of Edinburgh, equipped and provisioned for forty days, and prepared to follow him wherever Fate led. Never before or since had such an army assembled on Scottish soil—the finest, most united, most loyal that yet had " bent to War's emprise." And when it marched out by way of Soutra Hill, down the Leader to Earlston for Tweedside and the Border, the whole neighbourhood for miles around turned out to view the inspiring spectacle. On Sunday, August 21, they reached Coldstream, and encamped on the Lees Haugh overnight. The next ten days or so were spent harrying the enemy's territory, laying siege to the strongholds of Norham, Wark, Etal, and Ford, and occupying and entrenching themselves in an impregnable position on the brown slope of Flodden spur. Meanwhile, Lord Surrey, England's most capable commander, was speeding northwards with a force of something like 38,000 men. By September 8, the day preceding that fixed for the fight, in answer

to his challenge to the Scots King, he lay at Barmoor Wood, four miles due east from where James's

" White pavilions made a show
Like remnants of the winter snow
Along the dusky ridge."

Next morning, by a clever flanking manœuvre, Surrey managed to completely outwit the Scots. Sending one section of his army—the heavier portion—westwards across the sluggish Till at Twizel Bridge, while the main body forded the river, some say at Milford, the best authorities at Sandyford, two or three miles further up the stream, he found himself upon the long Moor of Branxton, close to the little Northumberland village, facing the Scots, and between them and their own country :

" From Flodden ridge
The Scots beheld the English host
Leave Barmoor Wood, their evening post,
And heedful watch'd them as they cross'd
The Till by Twizel Bridge.
High sight it is, and haughty, while
They dive into the deep defile ;
Beneath the cavern'd cliff they fall,
Beneath the castle's airy wall.
By rock, by oak, by hawthorn-tree,
Troop after troop are disappearing ;
Troop after troop their banners rearing,
Upon the eastern bank you see.
Still pouring down the rocky den,
Where flows the sullen Till,
And rising from the dim-wood glen,
Standards on standards, men on men,
In slow succession still,
And, sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,
And pressing on, in ceaseless march,
To gain the opposing hill.
That morn, to many a trumpet clang,
Twizel ! thy rocks' deep echo rang ;
And many a chief of birth and rank,
Saint Helen ! at thy fountain drank.
Thy hawthorn glade, which now we see
In springtide bloom so lavishly,
Had then from many an axe its doom,
To give the marching columns room."

It was a fatal movement for James and his gallants. From

Flodden's "airy brow" he had beheld that gleaming phalanx defile onwards by Till's rush-bound side, and lifted never a gun against them. Harshly did he answer those who ventured advice:

"What checks the fiery soul of James?
Why sits that champion of the dames
Inactive on his steed,
And sees, between him and his land,
Between him and Tweed's southern strand,
His host Lord Surrey lead?
What 'vails the vain knight-errant's brand?
O, Douglas, for thy leading wand!
Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!
O for one hour of Wallace's wight,
Or well-skill'd Bruce, to rule the fight,
And cry—'Saint Andrew and our right!'
Another sight had seen that morn
From Fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
And Flodden had been Bannockburn!"

At last, when the real meaning of Surrey's tactics flashed upon him, with a wild command the camp was fired, and James's magnificent following, dwindled sore by many a desertion, descended the hill-slope into the same hollow where the English waited for the fray:

"'But see! look up! on Flodden bent,
The Scottish foe has fired his tent';
And, sudden as he spoke,
From the sharp ridges of the hill,
All downward to the banks of Till,
Was wreathed in sable smoke.
Volumed and vast, and rolling far,
The cloud enveloped Scotland's war,
As down the hill they broke;
Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,
Announced their march; their tread alone
At times one warning trumpet blown,
At times a stifled hum,
Told England from his mountain-throne
King James did rushing come."

Not, however, until four o'clock in the afternoon—late in the day for a great battle in the month of September—did the onrush begin in earnest. For four terrible hours its mad career swept on, until gloaming gathered in the glen and the thick,

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Geo. W. Gibson

THE MONUMENT ON FLODDEN FIELD
(Erected 1910)

black pall of night overcast the whole landscape, rendering it impossible to distinguish friend from foe. "Marmion" transcends all prose descriptions:

"And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
Above the brightening cloud appears;
And in the smoke the pennons flew,
As in the storm the white sea-mew.
Then mark'd they, dashing broad and far,
The broken billows of the war;
And plumèd crests of chieftains brave,
Floating like foam upon the wave,
But nought distinct they see.
Wide raged the battle on the plain;
Spears shook, and falchions flash'd amain,
Fell England's arrow-flight like rain;
Crests rose, and stoop'd, and rose again,
Wild and disorderly.
Amid the scene of tumult, high
They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly;
And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
And Edmund Howard's lion bright,
Still bear them bravely in the fight,
Although against them come
Of gallant Gordons many a one,
And many a stubborn Badenoch-man,
And many a rugged Border clan
With Huntly and with Home."

And around the Soldier-King—true warrior notwithstanding his tactlessness—fighting as a common foot-soldier, with his nobles hedging him in, "more desperate grew the strife of death":

"The English shafts in volleys hail'd,
In headlong charge their horse assail'd;
Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep
To break the Scottish circle deep,
That fought around their King.
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring.
The stubborn spearmen still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood
The instant that he fell.

No thought was there of dastard flight;
Link'd in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well,
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded King."

Both armies kept the field during the night, unable to tell with which side was the victory. At day-dawn the truth was sadly apparent:

"There, Scotland! lay thy bravest pride—
Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one,"

and stretched on the gory heath, his left hand almost severed, and a gaping wound in his royal neck, James himself lay stark and still.

There is no reliable account as to the number of the slain. It amounted to many thousands on both sides; but while the English lost only those of ordinary rank, the flower and pride of Scotland's chivalry had perished. Among the dead were the Sovereign, twelve Earls, fifteen Lords and Chiefs of clans, an Archbishop, two Abbots, the French Ambassador, several French Captains who took part in the campaign, and numerous minor gentry. There was, it has often been said, scarcely a family of note in the nation but owned a grave in "Branxton's bloody barrow":

"Many a mother's melting lay
Mourn'd o'er the bright flowers wede away;
And many a maid, with tears of sorrow,
Whose locks no more were seen to wave,
Pined for the beauteous and the brave,
Who came not on the morrow!
From northern Thule to the Tweed
Was heard the wail and felt the shock;
And o'er the mount, and through the mead,
Untended, wander'd many a flock.
In many a creek, on many a shore;
Lay tattered sail and rotting oar;
And from the castle to the dwelling
Of the rude hind, a common grief,
In one low wail that sought relief,
From Scotland's heart came swelling!"

Flodden Field, or Branxton, as the English chroniclers invariably refer to the fight, is now well under cultivation. The

plough has long taken the place of the sword. " How that red rain hath made the harvest grow ! " But the opposing positions are still pointed out. On the rounded, fir-crowned height above us, still known as the " King's Camp," the Scots army lay for the four days preceding the battle. The bold, craggy eminence a little further on, to which tradition has given the name of the " King's Chair," and from which the whole valley can be scanned, was probably James's reconnaissance post. And the " weary pilgrim " may still quench his thirst at the traditional " Sybil's Well," near the base of the hill, close to the farm of Encampment. Set in its sweet moss-clad grotto—

> " Where water clear as diamond-spark
> In a stone basin fell "—

how deliciously ice-cold on even the hottest mid-summer day ! Carved on the lintel is the legend :

> " Drink, weary pilgrim, drink and stay,
> Rest by the well of Sybil Grey "—

a garbled adaptation from " Marmion." Out to east and north the prospect is one of rare beauty. Here and there we catch glimpses of the " sullen Till " winding its lazy way northwards. One never forgets the well-known rhyme which Robert Chambers tells us he first heard from the " deep voice of Sir Walter Scott when it seemed to me to possess a solemnity approaching to poetry " :

> " Tweed said to Till,
> ' What gars ye rin sae still ?
> Till said to Tweed,
> ' Though ye rin wi' speed,
> And I rin slaw,
> Yet where ye drown ae man,
> I drown twa.' "

The dark-brown battlements of Ford stand out in strong perspective against the thick-set woods opposite. And beyond, to the north-east, Barmoor edge, Surrey's camping-ground on the eve of the fight, is distinctly visible. We may trace his line of march westwards by Duddo and Heaton to Twizel Bridge, a mile or so from the Tweed. Its grand Gothic arch girding the treacherous Till, which here flows through a deep picturesque

ravine faced with shelving, broken, grotesque rocks, and tangled and shaggy with wood, remains practically the same as when Lord Howard's vanguard swept across it—

> " With all their banners bravely spread,
> And all their armour flashing high."

St. Helen's Fountain still gurgles from its flinty bed as it must have done for ages, and save for the greener glow of the landscape, and its deeper woodland setting, the scene is little changed from that fateful Friday more than four hundred years ago.

Branxton lies within a mile or two in the hollow, an old place, and, doubtless, the true site of the battle. Evidences abundant have been unearthed—skulls and bones, cannon-balls, spear-heads, pieces of armour, and other relics. Hard by the roadside, about fifty yards from the Church, the real " Sybil's Well," to which Scott refers, will be seen ; and crossing the road is the " runnel " from which Clare, seeking the " cup of blessed water " for the wounded and dying knight, shrank back in abhorrence—

> " For, oozing from the mountain's side,
> Where raged the war, a dark-red tide
> Was curdling in the streamlet blue."

Here also is " Marmion's Hill," the reputed scene of his death, and many another spot associated rather with the romantic than the historic element. Fact and fiction have strangely intermingled. For, curiously, it is somehow taken for granted that every incident in " Marmion "—containing, as it does, a fairly accurate account of the fight—should find confirmation and location on these grassy downs of Branxton and Flodden.

At Ford, " full of solemn feudality," as William Howitt described it in the early fifties, build about 1287, and now finely restored, James is said to have spent those days of dalliance which gave the English time to come north and crush him. Scott represents the Lady Heron, wife of Sir William Heron, " Baron of Twizel and of Ford "—then a prisoner at Fast Castle —as one of the ornaments at the Court of Holyrood when—

> " King James within her princely bower
> Feasted the Chiefs of Scotland's power,
> Summoned to spend the parting hour."

It was a night of "wassell, mirth, and glee." Dame Heron chanted the ballad of "Young Lochinvar," and, like a very siren, conquered the foolish, infatuated monarch. Her glancing dark eyes and artful blushes were interpreted, too, by Marmion. Tradition has persistently retailed a romantic attachment between this Lady and the King, and she has been branded—surely falsely—as the real source of the Flodden disaster, in going between the armies and betraying James to Surrey. There is still seen the "King's Tower" at Ford, a massive Norman pile overlooking the battlefield, and in its upper part, in the "King's Room," above the fireplace, are the Royal Arms of Scotland with the inscription :

"King James ye 4th of Scotland did lye here at Ford Castle a.d. 1513."

Than Ford there is not a prettier parish in Northumberland. To Louisa, Marchioness of Waterford, one of Augustus Hare's "Two Noble Lives," its exceeding picturesqueness is due. In ancient days the place was no better than its neighbours—"squalid and miserable, the street being so badly paved and drained as to need stepping-stones to gain access to the cottages. But when *the Lady* came she changed all this, and, in the words of the people, 'she raised the village.'" One can scarcely realize that this broad open space, flanked by such wealth of foliage in trees aad flowering shrubs, is the village street. To transform Ford into a "thing of beauty and a joy" so long as she lived, at least, was her Ladyship's constant endeavour. How well she succeeded every visitor knows.

Perhaps her best memorial is found in the Schoolroom. For two-and-twenty years the deft fingers and artistic eye and brain of the Good Marchioness wrought these triumphs of genius—a unique gallery of sacred art—which adorn the interior. Here may the youth of Ford learn the great historic lessons of Scripture and something also of their higher significance. Cain and Abel, Abraham and Isaac, Jacob and Esau, Joseph, Moses and Miriam, Samuel, David the Shepherd, Josiah, Daniel, our Lord and His Apostles, are all there before them, graphic and life-like. For a moment we linger by the Angel Fountain and granite pillar in memory of the popular Marquess who had, Absalom-like, "no

son to keep his name in remembrance." At worship on the morning of his death, that passage from the Second Book of Samuel had been read. Fond of sport, he went out to the hunt in the heyday of health and vigour. Ere the evening shades had closed around Curraghmore, his Irish home, he was borne back dead. To his widow he bequeathed Ford Castle, and, making it her chief residence, this gracious Lady was for over thirty years the most beloved figure in the district. To hundreds she was the dearest and tenderest of friends, the inspirer and encourager of every good and beneficent enterprise. Now rests she under the shadow of the beautiful rural sanctuary which filled so large a place in her life.

It is difficult to drag one's self away from Ford, so full and so fascinating is it of a " past of war and pageants and a present of flowers and art." But " to Berwick we are bound," and Marmion's footsteps take us back to Twizel, passing on the way the " King's Stone," where James is said to have fallen in his flight from Flodden. A few miles further, and " Norham's castled steep " looms up before us, the most famous of the Tweedside fortresses immortalized by Sir Walter Scott. Of almost impregnable strength, set down, as it were, to overawe a kingdom, it is now a total ruin. Seen from the wide graceful " wheel " of the Tweed, commanding the steep wooded bank above, its broken battlements yellowing in the " western blaze," as Marmion mayhap saw the same golden glory, nothing equals Scott's description :

" Day set on Norham's castled steep
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
And Cheviot's mountains lone ;
The battled towers, the donjon keep,
The loophole grates, where captives weep,
The flanking walls that round it sweep,
In yellow lustre shone.
The warriors on the turrets high,
Moving athwart the evening sky,
Seem'd forms of giant height :
Their armour, as it caught the rays,
Flash'd back again the western blaze,
In lines of dazzling light."

Founded in the seventh century, Norham was a burgh of the Northumbrian kingdom in the eighth. From Lindisfarne it

received the Gospel, and its church was an early Culdee settlement. Here the holy Aidan preached, and Cuthbert, his successor, became its patron Saint. Flambard, the fighting Bishop of Durham, built the Castle of Norham in 1121, probably on the site of an older stronghold. David I. of Scotland dismantled it in 1138. The famous Bishop Hugh Pudsey rebuilt it between 1154 and 1170, rearing that red-stone tower which remains to this day. In 1174 it was held as a Royal Castle by Henry II. Alexander II. attacked it unsuccessfully for forty days in 1215. Under King John it rose to super-keep rank among English fortresses. Edward I. resided at Norham when acting as arbiter in the claims for the Scottish Succession. A few years after Bannockburn it withstood a prolonged but hopeless siege from the Scots. And for the next two centuries it was a bone of constant contention. The place fell to James IV. in the week preceding Flodden, and, following that event, was repaired and occupied by the English. But its glory had departed, and early in the seventeenth century it was become little more than a mere waste and wilderness of stones.

Norham village, anciently Ubbanford, with broad, long street and curiously receding houses, the Green, the Cross, and fine Norman Church, are all of interest to the lover of Border lore. Ladykirk Church, on the opposite bank of the river, was built by James IV. in 1500, in gratitude for his escape from drowning while fording the Tweed. And on the green haugh of Holywell, hard by, Edward I. received, in great state, the fealty of the Scots in 1291.

Further down the river we pass Paxton, a reputed locale of the song "Robin Adair." Close by, amid some of the finest scenery on the lower Tweed, the first Suspension Bridge in the Kingdom, built in 1821 by the inventor, Sir Samuel Brown, unites the two countries. Within five miles lies "our town of Berwick-upon-Tweed," as the phrase still holds in Acts of Parliament and royal Proclamations. Berwick's origin is lost in a dense antiquity. Long before the Norman Conquest it was a flourishing township, by and by the chief seaport in Scotland, and one of its first four royal burghs. Christianized towards the close of the fourth century, according to Bede, as a place of rich churches, monasteries, and hospitals, Berwick held high

rank in the ecclesiastical world. Its geographical position as a frontier town made it the Strasburg for which contending armies were continually in conflict. Century after century its history was one red record of strife and bloodshed. David I., the Lion King, Henry II., and John of England, Edward I.—in whose reign the discussion of the claims of Baliol and Bruce to the Scottish Crown took place in the Dominican sanctuary at Berwick—Edward II., Wallace, and Bruce all left their mark on this ancient Key of the Border. In 1482 the town was finally relinquished by the Scots and ceded to England, and in 1551, after many weary viscissitudes, it was constituted an independent burgh, belonging to neither country. Its walls, built in Elizabeth's reign—it was one of the few walled and gated towns in Britain—were dismantled in 1822, and now form a pleasant promenade. Within its long-demolished Castle, Edward I. confined the Countess of Buchan in an iron cage for four years for having set the crown on the head of Bruce at Scone. The antique Romanesque Bridge spanning the river between Berwick and Tweedmouth took no fewer than twenty-five years to build, from 1609 to 1634, while the Royal Border Bridge, Robert Stephenson's prepossessing structure—styled "the last act of the Union," and opened by Queen Victoria in 1850—was completed within three years. A spacious new Bridge was opened by the Prince of Wales in 1928.

John Mackay Wilson, poet and dramatist, and projector of the popular "Tales of the Border," was born at Tweedmouth in 1803, dying there in 1835; and Dr. Robert Lee, of the famous Organ controversy in the Church of Scotland, was also a native of the place. Tweedmouth Moor was the scene of the brave Grizel Cochrane's encounter with the English mail-carrier whom she robbed of the death-warrant of her father, Sir John Cochrane of Ochiltree, condemned for high treason in Charles II.'s time. Near by, "Summery Spittal," with its fine beach and Spa, attracts an increasing number of visitors. Other scenes of note in the vicinity are Halidon Hill, the English revenge for Bannockburn, where the Scots, under the Regent Douglas, suffered dire defeat in 1333; Lamberton Toll, notorious, like Coldstream, for its clandestine marriages; the ruin of Lamberton Kirk, within whose walls James IV. was wedded in 1503 to Margaret of

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England; further up the Berwickshire coast, the striking promontory of St. Abb's, sacred to Ebba of Northumbria and her winsome devotion; and Fast Castle, the "Wolf's Crag" of the most fascinating and pathetic of Scott's romances—a poem in prose—the "Bride of Lammermoor." Ever where the winds sweep resounding across the great hills of East Lothian, or the broader expanse of the Northern Sea; where they rustle through the upland heather, or fan the grass on the cliffs under the walls of Fast Castle, will they tell the mournful story and breathe its plaintive requiem.

CHAPTER XIX

THE PASSING OF THE WIZARD

THE annals of literature contain no act of heroism more honourable or more pathetic than Scott at the age of fifty-five—prematurely old, and ruined in the midst of his fortunes—setting himself to "write off" the enormous liabilities which confronted him with the crash of 1826. "Time and I against any two," he said, "and God give me health and strength, and I will yet pay every man his due." When asked where he could possibly find the means of meeting such a demand, he pointed significantly to his head, and answered, "Here." In the six years between 1826 and 1832, the debt was reduced from £130,000 to about £54,000. After his death a further sum of £22,000 received from his life insurance, with the profits of the novels and sale of copyright, discharged all claims against him. His creditors were satisfied, and no man had more magnanimous treatment from those to whom he was indebted. His literary output was a very miracle of intellectual fertility and dogged determination. From every point of view the struggle was herculean—more than sufficient to crush the strongest soul—and one hardly wonders that the "breaking-up" period began thus early. For some time his health had been failing. It was in February, 1830, that the first really bad symptoms showed themselves in an attack of an apoplectic nature, which caused him to fall speechless and senseless on the floor. By November of the same year he had a second slight stroke, and in April, 1831, a third and more distinct seizure. Still he continued to work, turning a deaf ear to every friendly warning. "Count Robert" and "Castle Dangerous," the fruit of this period, were practically failures. At length it was decided that he should spend the winter of 1831 in Italy, where his son Charles was an attaché of the British Embassy at Naples. Several interesting episodes occurred before his departure. On September 17 the "boy of Burns"—Captain James Glencairn

Burns—visited Scott at Abbotsford, and for the last time a party was held, and something of the old splendour revived. The occasion called forth Lockhart's lines beginning :

" A day I've seen whose brightness pierced the cloud
Of pain and sorrow ; both for great and small—
A night of flowing cups and pibrochs loud
Once more within the Minstrel's blazoned hall " ;

and ending with the prayer :

" Heaven send the Guardian Genius of the vale
Health yet, and strength, and length of honoured days,
To cheer the world with many a gallant tale,
And hear his children's children chant his lays !

" Through seas unruffled may the vessel glide
That bears her Poet far from Melrose glen
And may his pulse be steadfast as our pride
When happy breezes waft him back again ! "

On the 21st, Wordsworth arrived to take farewell. The day following, " these two great poets, who had through life loved each other well," spent the morning together in a visit to Newark. Hence the third of the poems—" Yarrow Revisited "—by which Wordsworth has connected his name for all time with the most romantic of Scottish streams. " On our return in the afternoon," he says, " we had to cross the Tweed directly opposite Abbotsford. The wheels of our carriage grated upon the pebbles in the bed of the river that there flows somewhat rapidly ; a rich but sad light of rather a purple than a golden hue was spread over the Eildon Hills at that moment ; and, thinking it probable that it might be the last time Sir Walter would cross the stream, I was not a little moved, and expressed some of my feelings in the sonnet :

' A trouble, not of clouds, or weeping rain,
Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light
Engendered, hangs o'er Eildon's triple height ;
Spirits of Power, assembled there, complain
For kindred Power departing from their sight ;
While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a blithe strain,
Saddens his voice again and yet again.
Lift up your hearts, ye Mourners ! for the might

Of the whole world's good wishes with him goes;
Blessings and prayers in nobler retinue
Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror knows,
Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be true,
Ye winds of ocean, and the midland sea,
Wafting your Charge to soft Parthenope!' "

Scott left Abbotsford on September 23 for London, where a month was spent. On October 29, in company with his son and two daughters, he sailed from Portsmouth in H.M.S. *Barham*, placed at his service by the Government, though opposed, it should be remembered, to Scott's party in politics. It is unnecessary to detail the incidents of the next nine months. Malta, Naples, Pompeii, Rome, and other Italian towns were visited. He seemed to recover some of his old vigour and ambition. Two new novels were begun and nearly finished, and at Naples he went back to his first love in the formation of a collection of Neapolitan and Sicilian ballads. But his heart was ever homeward turned. The exile's song rang in his ears:

"Hame! hame! hame! O hame fain wad I be!
O hame! hame! hame! to my ain countrie!"

Much of the scenery reminded him of Scotland—the Eildons, Cauldshiels, Abbotsford. A peasant's lilt recalled the melodies of the Border, and pathetically he began to recite "Jock o' Hazeldean" and his boyhood's "Hardyknute." When he heard of Goethe's death, whom he hoped to visit, he exclaimed: "Alas for Goethe, but he at least died at home. Let us to Abbotsford." So the return journey was begun—by Venice, through the Tyrol to Frankfort, thence down the Rhine to Rotterdam, and to London, which was reached on June 13. During the voyage he had another attack, "the crowning blow" Lockhart calls it, a shaking of hands with death. And as an unconscious and exhausted invalid he was driven to the St. James's Hotel in Jermyn Street, where he lay for three weeks in a state of supreme stupor. "Abbotsford" was his cry in the clearer intervals that came to him. Like his own "Meg Merrilies" with the Kaim of Derncleugh, it seemed as if the spirit could not quit its clay save from the place of strongest memories.

"At length," says Dr. Ferguson, one of his medical attendants, "his

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Now under the care of H.M. Commissioners of Works

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constant yearning to return to Abbotsford induced his physicians to consent to his removal. And the moment this was notified to him it seemed to infuse new vigour into his frame. It was on a calm, clear afternoon of July 7 that every preparation was made for his embarkation on board the steamboat. He was placed on a chair by his faithful servant Nicolson, half-dressed, and loosely wrapped in a quilted dressing-gown. He requested Lockhart and myself to wheel him towards the light of the open window, and we both remarked the vigorous lustre of his eye. He sat there, silently gazing on space for more than half an hour, apparently wholly occupied with his own thoughts, and having no distinct perception of where he was, or how he came there. He suffered himself to be lifted into his carriage, which was surrounded by a crowd, among whom were many gentlemen on horseback, who had loitered about to gaze on the scene. His children were deeply affected, and Mrs. Lockhart trembled from head to foot, and wept bitterly. Thus surrounded by those nearest to him, he alone was unconscious of the cause or the depth of their grief, and while yet alive seemed to be carried to his grave."

The *James Watt* arrived at Newhaven on the 9th, and being still, as during all the voyage, in a comatose condition, he was conveyed to the Douglas Hotel in St. Andrew Square, where the last two days in his " own romantic town " were passed. At a very early hour on the morning of the 11th the drive to Abbotsford was commenced. At first, wholly oblivious of his whereabouts as he was borne through scenes the most familiar to him in the world, he revived somewhat when the Vale of the Gala came in sight. The Wizard was returning to his own. Every foot was glamoured ground. The wand which had been waved over it with so subtle a spell was his own—unbroken while Time shall last. And now that he had again touched the border of the land he loved best on earth, and for the last time, the curtain lifted and consciousness returned. The spirits that rule the realm of Romance seemed whispering to him as he lay there in the smiling summer sun, and for a few brief moments he recognized the features of the landscape. " Gala Water, surely—Buckholm—Torwoodlee." When he saw the Eildons he became greatly excited, and in turning himself on the couch he caught a glimpse of his own towers at the distance of about a mile, and uttering a cry of delight, could hardly be kept in the carriage.* Then he relapsed into stupor, but on gaining the bank immediately above Melrose Bridge his excitement became again

* The spot has been suitably commemorated by a tablet in the roadside wall not far from Langlee.

ungovernable. It was the glad, happy, released, satisfied sense that took hold of him of at last being "hame," amongst his "honest grey hills," in sight of the sun-kissed Eildons, within sound of the "chiming Tweed," and Abbotsford with the old familiar faces. Laidlaw was waiting at the door, and assisted in carrying him to the dining-room, where his bed had been prepared. He sat bewildered for a moment or two, and then, resting his eye on his old friend, said: "Ha! Willie Laidlaw! O man, how often have I thought of *you*!" By this time his dogs assembled around his chair, fawning on him, and licking his hands. Between sobs and smiles he tried to speak to them until exhausted nature laid him asleep in the house of his dreams.

He lingered for some weeks, alternating between cloud and sunshine. One day the longing for his pen seized him, and he was wheeled studywards, but the pen dropped from his nerveless fingers. "It was like Napoleon resigning his empire. The sceptre had departed from Judah; Scott was to *write no more*." Little wonder that he sank back on his pillow and the large tears flowed down his cheek; or that, after a brief sleep, Laidlaw having said, "Sir Walter has had a little repose," he exclaimed, "No, Willie; no repose for Sir Walter but in the grave." The great Shadow-bringer was fast approaching, and he must have felt the beating of His wings. When at his request Lockhart was about to read and inquired from what book, he replied: "Need you ask? there is but one." The author himself of over a hundred volumes, and surrounded by a vast library in all languages, there was but one Book he thought worth listening to—one Book which could now give him solace. Of it he had written:

> "Within that awful volume lies
> The mystery of mysteries!
> Happiest they of human race,
> To whom God has granted grace
> To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,
> To lift the latch, and force the way;
> And better had they ne'er been born
> Who read to doubt, or read to scorn."

Lockhart reading the fourteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel to Scott is one of the most impressive appeals for the verities of

the Christian faith. "Well, this is a great comfort. I have followed you distinctly, and I feel as if I were yet to be myself again," he said. "What pencil," * asks George Gilfillan, "shall give us the aged and worn-out Wizard, with velvet cap, faded features, but brilliant eye, listening in the library of Abbotsford to the blended sounds of the Tweed gently murmuring o'er its pebbles, and the accents of the divinest love and compassion flowing from the lips of the Man of Sorrows? 'Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you.'" But delirium and delusion again prostrated him, and he sank daily. "Now he thought himself administering justice as the Selkirkshire 'Shirra'; anon he was giving Tom Purdie orders anent trees; now, it is said, he dreamed he was in hell—a dream not uncommon with imaginative persons *in extremis*. Sometimes, according to Lockhart, his fancy was in Jedburgh, and the words 'Burke Sir Walter' escaped him in a dolorous tone; and anon his mind seemed for the last time to 'yoke itself with whirlwinds and the northern blast,' and, as it 'swept the long tract of day,' words issued from it worthy of the Great Minstrel, snatches from Isaiah or the Book of Job, some grand rugged verse torn off from the Scottish Psalms, or an excerpt sublimer still from the Romish Litany." "As I was dressing on the morning of September 17th," says Lockhart, "Nicolson came into my room and told me that his master had awoke in a state of composure and consciousness, and wished to see me immediately. I found him entirely himself, though in the last extreme of feebleness. His eye was clear and calm—every trace of the wild fire of delirium extinguished. 'Lockhart,' he said, 'I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man; be virtuous, be religious, be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here.'" About half-past one on the afternoon of Friday, September 21, Sir Walter Scott breathed his last in the presence of all his children. It was a beautiful day—the autumn sun stole softly in at the open window, and the music of the Tweed fell gently on the ear.

* Such a picture has come from the brush of Charles Martin Hardie, R.S.A. See George G. Napier's "Homes and Haunts of Sir Walter Scott."

" Slow o'er his reverend head
The darkness crept,
While nations round his bed
Stood still, and wept ! "

All the newspapers in Scotland, and many in England, clothed their columns in black for his death, and on the day of the funeral the bells of most cities rang a muffled peal. On Wednesday, September 26, his mortal remains were consigned to the tomb amid the mourning of thousands. Never in Border story was there a more honoured " passing." Invitations were issued to nearly 300 persons, most of whom attended :

SIR,

" The honour of your company here on Wednesday, the 26th inst., at one o'clock afternoon, to attend the funeral of Sir Walter Scott, my father, from his house to the burial ground in Dryburgh Abbey, will oblige

" Your most obedient servant,

" WALTER SCOTT.

" ABBOTSFORD, 22 *September*, 1832."

Services at Abbotsford, in the simple Scottish fashion, were conducted by the Revs. Dr. George Husband Baird, Principal of Edinburgh University, Dr. David Dickson of St. Cuthbert's, and George Thomson of Melrose. About two o'clock the melancholy procession set out. All along the route—every rood of which Scott had ridden and driven hundreds of times—the evidences of the people's sorrow were many and striking. " It was melancholy at the very first," says Robert Chambers, who was present, " to see the deceased carried out of a house which bore so many marks of his taste, and of which every point, and almost every article of furniture, was so identified with himself. But it was doubly touching to see him carried, insensible and inurned, through the beautiful scenery which he has in different ways rendered from its most majestic to its minutest features a matter of interest unto all time. At every successive turn of the way appeared some object which he had either loved because it was the subject of former song, or rendered delightful by his own." No figure in the Border country had been more familiar, or was more beloved by all classes of the community.

" There was wailing on the autumn breeze and darkness in the sky,*
When, with sable plume, and cloak, and pall, his funeral train swept by."

From Darnick Tower, a broad black banner of crape, hanging at half-mast, eloquently bespoke the grief of the villagers. The " sad hearts at Darnick," of which he had written seven years before in his " Journal," were now a bitter reality. Their " Duke " would never visit them more. At Melrose the bell tolled from the church steeple, and in accordance with the public notice,† all work was suspended, and the whole place wore an aspect of deepest gloom.

" In the little market-place," says an eye-witness, " we found the whole male population assembled, all decently dressed in deep mourning, drawn up in two lines, and standing, with their hats off, silent and motionless. Grief was deeply impressed upon every honest countenance. We looked with extreme interest towards the Abbey. It seemed in our eyes that in common with all animated nature it had been endowed on this occasion with a soul and with intelligence to hail the melancholy pageant which wound away from it, and to grieve that its holy soil was to be denied the sad honour of receiving the ashes of its poet. A mild light streamed over the Eildon Hills, and fell softly on the ruined pile. We might have fancied that his spirit was hovering over this, his own dearest spot, and smiling a last farewell to it." For Melrose was the place of all others where Scott should have lain. It was only the accident of ancestry that bequeathed to Dryburgh the highest of her honours. Scott's creative genius was Melrose's claim of right for the body of the greater Wizard, " whence burst his first, most ardent song."

And now Newstead is reached, with narrow, tortuous street and wealth of sundials. Old-world and picturesque, the village is situated near the important military station of Trimontium,

* " The day was dark and lowering, and the wind high."—LOCKHART.

† " NOTICE.

" As a mark of deserved esteem and respect to the memory of the late Sir Walter Scott, Bart., it is requested that the shops in Melrose and Darnick may be shut from a quarter past one till half past two o'clock to-morrow, and that the church bell should toll from the time the funeral procession reaches Melrose Bridge till it passes the village of Newstead.

" JAMES CURLE.

" Melrose, *Tuesday*, 25 *Sept.*, 1832."

so named from triple Eildon, at whose base it was reared.* Thence the road in a gradual ascent, lined by the sweetest of hedgerows, follows the Tweed, revealing at its highest point a magnificent panorama of Melrose Glen ; and in front the rich variegated landscape of

> " Ercildoune and Cowdenknowes
> Where Homes had ance commanding ;
> And Drygrange, wi' the milk-white yowes,
> Twixt Tweed and Leader standing."

The last crossing of the Tweed was at Leaderfoot, at one of the noblest bends of the river. How long and steep the climb to Gledswood and Bemersyde, past Kirklands and Redpath ! Here the Redpath schoolboys counted the carriages—sixty-two in all, as one of them, a well-advanced octogenarian, recalled to the present writer. On the crest of Bemersyde Hill, through a slight accident, never rightly explained,† the cortege paused at the very spot, strangely enough, where Scott so frequently halted for his favourite view

> " Where fair Tweed flows round holy Melrose,
> And Eildon slopes to the plain."

Then on through Bemersyde village, past the ancient domicile of the Haigs, along the finely-wooded highway whence Sandyknowe Tower may be seen to the east, and once more down close to the Tweed, brimming full from bank to bank, the peculiar, reddish-brown scaurs and soil of the district imparting a rich Claude-effect to the scene, and Dryburgh came in sight,

> " Where with chiming Tweed
> The lint-whites sing in chorus."

* Many of the Newstead houses are adorned with old, curiously-carved sundials. Trimontium is marked in Ptolemy's map of Britain, about A.D. 140. This Roman station, occupied from the time of Agricola A.D. 80 to at least A.D. 180, was extensively explored under the auspices of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, and most of its interesting relics are in their Museum at Edinburgh. See Dr. Curle's " A Roman Frontier Post and its People " (1911). In 1928 the Edinburgh Border Counties Association erected a memorial in shape of a Roman altar, on the high ground overlooking the Tweed above Newstead, where the Camp stood. Everything is now levelled by the plough.

† It is stated with some certainty that one of Sir Walter's horses helped to draw the hearse, hence the momentary delay.

B. C. Clayton

DRYBURGH—ST. MARY'S AISLE

The Grave of Earl Haig of Bemersyde is within the railed enclosure on the left.

Now under the care of H.M. Commissioners of Works.

Besides its great antiquity, Dryburgh boasts a location unrivalled in the whole of Scotland. Surrounded on three sides by the Tweed, itself unseen from the Abbey precincts, and amidst "a brotherhood of venerable trees" of which some are known, from references to them in ancient documents as landmarks, to be almost as old as the Abbey itself,* in picturesqueness and seclusion of situation it is perhaps the most charming monastic ruin in Great Britain. The story of Dryburgh is practically that of the other Border abbeys. Here, about 522, Modan, an Irish Culdee saint, set up his sanctuary, before whose day, however, the Druid priests had long performed their pagan rites; hence the origin of the name—Darach Bruach—"the bank or grove of the oaks." The foundation of the Abbey, about 1150, is usually ascribed to Hugh de Morville, Lord of Lauderdale and High Constable of Scotland, but the saint-King, too, must be given credit for a share in the work; indeed, in a charter confirming the rich possessions of Dryburgh and his own pious liberality, he speaks of himself as Founder—"the church of Saint Mary of Dryburgh which I have founded" (*quam fundavi*). Some twelve years were occupied with the building operations, and a chapter of Premonstratensian Canons from Alnwick were the first colonists.

In 1162, the remains of de Morville were laid in a tomb in the chapter-house beside his wife, Beatrix de Beauchamp, where a double circle on the floor, now almost erased, marks their resting-place. For nearly 200 years the White Monks of Dryburgh enjoyed a tranquil prosperity. Abbot William, swearing fealty to the English Sovereign in 1296, saved the Abbey during the wars of the first Edward. But in 1322 the army of Edward II. partially destroyed the place, and though never completely restored, it fell an easy prey to the fury of Richard II. in 1385. In 1544, it was again pillaged and burned by Bowes and Latoun, and a year later by Hertford, who left it very much in the condition in which we see it to-day. Chaucer's friend, "the philosophicall Strode," to whom he dedicated his "Troilus and Cressida," received his early education at Dryburgh, during the first part of the fourteenth century, and it is asserted that

* A magnificent yew, close to the ruin, is believed to be coeval with the Abbey.

Chaucer himself, with the " morall Gower," visited Strode here, but that is improbable. Andrew Forman, Archbishop of St. Andrew's and French Ambassador, the most notable figure in the ecclesiastical politics of his time, was Commendator of Dryburgh about 1511. He was the chief negotiator of the marriage between James IV. and Margaret, daughter of Henry VII., in 1503, and more than any man is he regarded as responsible for the insane policy which culminated in the tragedy of Flodden. Thomas Hannah, the astronomer, was born in a house within the Abbey area, and Edwin Stirling, the sculptor, was also a native of Dryburgh. Connected with Dryburgh was the family of the Erskines, from which sprang the Founders of the Secession Church. Their father, Henry Erskine, minister of Chirnside, was born at Dryburgh in 1624, the son of Ralph Erskine, laird of Shielfield, an estate in the Leader valley still remaining in the family, and a direct descendant of the third Lord Erskine, who fell at Flodden. Ebenezer Erskine was born at Dryburgh, June 22, 1680, and Ralph at Moneylaws, in the parish of Carham, Northumberland, March 15, 1685. Whilst they had the best blood of Scotland in their veins, there was, says their most recent biographer, " another strain, less aristocratic, but quite as interesting. In 1559 the first Erskine of Shielfield married Elizabeth Haliburton, niece of the Thomas Haliburton to whom Sir Walter Scott traced his descent. In Dryburgh Abbey Sir Walter lies beside men who were not only his ancestors, but ancestors of the Erskines. He was probably unaware of the connection, which has only lately been discovered." * As a matter of fact, Shielfield came to the Erskines through this Haliburton alliance, Elizabeth Erskine being the only child and heiress of Walter Haliburton of Shielfield.

Thomas Haliburton of Newmains, Scott's great-grandfather, purchased in 1700, from Sir Patrick Scott, younger, of Ancrum, the abbey lands of Dryburgh, and the ruin would have descended to Sir Walter by inheritance but for the folly of a spendthrift grand-uncle, Robert, son to the above Thomas. Scott writes bitterly of him as a " weak, silly man, who engaged in trade for

* " The Erskines " (" Famous Scots " Series), by Professor A. R. MacEwen, D.D. ; but see also Scott's " Memorials of the Haliburtons."

which he had neither stock nor talents," and, becoming bankrupt, was forced to part with his property.* "The ancient patrimony," says Scott, "was sold for a trifle, and my father, who might have purchased it with ease, was dissuaded by my grandfather from doing so, and thus we have nothing left of Dryburgh but the right of stretching our bones there." In 1791 we find the Earl of Buchan bestowing such right of sepulture on Scott's father and his two uncles; and on a red sandstone slab at the back wall of the Lady Chapel, in St. Mary's Aisle, the gift is recorded:

"HUNC LOCUM SEPULTURÆ
D SENESCHALLUS BUCHANIÆ COMES
GUALTERO, THOMÆ, ROBERTO SCOTT
HALIBURTONI NEPOTIBUS CONCESSIT
A.D. MDCCXCI."

Here, then, "in the lap of legends old, in the heart of the land he has made enchanted," and amongst his ancestral dust, rests all that is mortal of the great Romancist. It was nightfall —about half-past five—when the memorable procession arrived at Dryburgh.

"The hearse drew close up to the house of Dryburgh, and the company, having quitted their carriages, pressed eagerly towards it. Not one word was spoken, but, as if all had been under the influence of some simultaneous instinct, they decently and decorously formed themselves

* The estate was sold in 1767 to Lieut.-Col. Charles Tod, H.E.I.C.S., for £5,500, not £3,000 as stated by Scott. It passed in 1786, also by sale, to David, eleventh Earl of Buchan, an Erskine, who began that labour of love which consisted in restoring the more ruined portions of the venerable pile, and gradually changing its surroundings into a scene of ideal sylvan loveliness. It is to his artistic, though sometimes eccentric, conceptions that Dryburgh owes the attractiveness which it has for the modern tourist. Lord Buchan was a dabbler in prose and verse, and made many contributions to the periodical literature of his day. His description of Dryburgh is in Grose's "Antiquities of Scotland," vol. i, 103. A natural son, Sir David Erskine, succeeded him in the Dryburgh lands in 1829. He was the author of a number of extravagant attempts at drama, and compiled the "Annals and Antiquities of Dryburgh and other Places on the Tweed." Dryburgh is now the property of the nation, through the generosity of the first Lord Glenconner of Glen. The ruin was taken over on behalf of His Majesty's Board of Works at an historic function within the Abbey grounds on May 14th, 1918, when a discourse on Sir Walter Scott was preached by the Right Rev. Professor James Cooper, D.D. See his *Kindness to the Dead* (London 1924).

into two lines. The servants of the deceased, resolved that no hireling should lay hands on the coffin of their master, approached the hearse. Amongst these the figure of the old coachman who had driven Sir Walter for so many years was peculiarly remarkable, reverentially bending to receive the coffin. No sooner did that black casket * appear which contained all that now remains of the most precious of Scotia's jewels, than with downcast eyes, and with countenances expressive of the deepest veneration, every individual present took off his hat. A moment's delay took place whilst the faithful and attached servants were preparing to bear the body, and whilst the relatives were arranging themselves around it in the following order :

Head.

MAJOR SIR WALTER SCOTT, eldest son of the deceased.

Right.		*Left.*
CHARLES SCOTT, second son.	THE BODY.	J. G. LOCKHART, son-in-law.
CHARLES SCOTT OF NESBITT, cousin.		JAMES SCOTT OF NESBITT, cousin.
WILLIAM SCOTT OF RAEBURN, cousin.		ROBERT RUTHERFORD, W.S., cousin.
COLONEL RUSSELL OF ASHESTIEL, cousin.		HUGH SCOTT OF HARDEN, cousin.

Foot.

WILLIAM KEITH, ESQ., EDINBURGH.

When all were in their places the bearers moved slowly forward, preceded by two mutes in long cloaks, carrying poles covered with crape ; and no sooner had the coffin passed through the double line formed by the company than the whole broke up, and followed in a thick press. At the head was the Rev. John Williams, Rector of the Edinburgh Academy, and Vicar of Lampeter, dressed in his canonicals as a clergyman of the Church of England ; and on his left hand walked Mr. Cadell, the well-known publisher of the Waverley Works. There was a solemnity, as well as a simplicity, in the whole of this spectacle which we never witnessed on any former occasion. The long-robed mutes ; the body with its devotedly attached and deeply afflicted supporters and attendants ; the clergyman, whose presence indicated the Christian belief and hopes of those assembled ; and the throng of uncovered and reverential mourners, stole along beneath the tall and umbrageous trees with a silence equal to that which is believed to accompany those visionary funerals which have their existence only in the superstitions of our country. . . . In such a scene as this, then, it was that the coffin of Sir Walter Scott was set down on tressels placed

* The coffin was plain and unpretending, covered with black cloth, and having an ordinary plate on it, with this inscription : " Sir Walter Scott of Abbotsford, Bart., aged 62." Joseph Shillinglaw, one of Scott's Darnick friends, carried out the funeral arrangements.

SCOTT'S FUNERAL
From a contemporary sketch

outside the iron railing; and here that solemn service, beginning with those words so cheering to the souls of Christians, 'I am the resurrection and the life,' was solemnly read by Mr. Williams. The manly, soldier-like features of the chief mourner, on whom the eyes of sympathy were most naturally turned, betrayed at intervals the powerful efforts which he made to master his emotions, as well as the inefficiency of his exertions to do so. The other relatives who surrounded the bier were deeply moved, and amid the crowd of sorrowing friends no eye and no heart could be discovered that was not together occupied in that sad and impressive ceremonial which was so soon to shut from them for ever him who had been so long the common idol of their admiration and of their best affections. Here and there, indeed, we might have fancied that we detected some early and long-tried friends of him who lay cold before us, who, whilst tears dimmed their eyes, and whilst their lips quivered, were yet partly engaged in mixing up and contrasting the happier scenes of days long gone by with that which they were now witnessing, until they became lost in dreamy reverie, so that even the movement made when the coffin was carried under the lofty arches of the ruin, and when dust was committed to dust, did not entirely snap the thread of their visions. It was not until the harsh sound of the hammers of the workmen who were employed to rivet those iron bars covering the grave to secure it from violation had begun to echo from the vaulted roof that some of us were called to the full conviction of the fact that the earth had for ever closed over that form which we were wont to love and reverence; that eye which we had so often seen beaming with benevolence, sparkling with wit, or lighted up with a poet's frenzy; those lips which we had so often seen monopolizing the attention of all listeners, or heard rolling out, with nervous accentuation, those powerful verses with which his head was continually teeming; and that brow, the perpetual throne of generous expression and liberal intelligence. Overwhelmed by the conviction of this afflicting truth, men moved away, without parting salutation, singly, slowly, and silently. The day began to stoop down into twilight, and we, too, after giving a last parting survey to the spot where now repose the remains of our Scottish Shakespeare, a spot lovely enough to induce his sainted spirit to haunt and sanctify its shades, hastily tore ourselves away." *

Henceforward, the chief memory of Dryburgh is not so much its sacred and storied Past, and the imaginary repeopling of its solitudes. For its own sake, how one delights to roam with reverent step through these classic shades! But the historical and traditional associations which cluster around it become dwarfed by the recollection that the great Master of Scottish

* By an eyewitness—Sir Thomas Dick Lauder. This is, perhaps, the best account that has been given of Scott's funeral, and the words of one who was a spectator ought to be preserved.

Romance chose his last sleeping-place here, amongst his own kith and kin—the loved ones * who came closest into his life, and in the midst of scenes that were imprinted on his very heart.

In 1847 a massive granite sarcophagus was placed over his grave, where hundreds of thousands from all ends of the earth have read its simple words :

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BARONET.
DIED SEPTEMBER 21, A.D. 1832.

* Lady Scott was buried in 1826. The inscription on her tombstone reads :

DAME CHARLOTTE MARGARET CARPENTER,
WIFE OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT OF ABBOTSFORD, BARONET,
DIED AT ABBOTSFORD MAY 15, A.D. 1826.

Here also rests the hope of his family, the second and last Baronet, who died childless :

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL SIR WALTER SCOTT
OF ABBOTSFORD, SECOND BARONET,
DIED AT SEA 8 FEBRUARY, 1847, AGED 45 YEARS.
HIS WIDOW PLACED THIS STONE OVER HIS GRAVE.

DAME JANE JOBSON,
HIS WIDOW,
DIED AT LONDON, 19 MARCH, 1877, AGED 76 YEARS.

Lastly.

HERE
AT THE FEET OF WALTER SCOTT
LIE
THE MORTAL REMAINS OF
JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART,
HIS SON-IN-LAW,
BIOGRAPHER AND FRIEND.
BORN 14 JUNE, 1794,
DIED 25 NOV., 1854.

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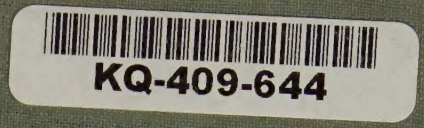
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